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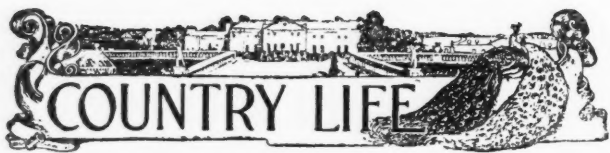
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RICHARD N. SPEAIGHT.

LADY DELAMERE AND HER SON.

170, Regent Street.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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OUR "MANLY" . . . AMUSEMENTS.

ONE of our contemporaries reminds us that it is just 200 years since the birth of John Broughton, who was called the "Father of English Boxing." He strayed accidentally as it were into the paths of pugilism, having made discovery of his own prowess through having to fight with a fellow-workman. So satisfied was he with the result that he began to challenge people to fight him for wagers, and this laid the foundation of the profession of boxing, which counted so much with our ancestors of the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth centuries. Broughton's star shone in the middle of the eighteenth century, and his victorious career received its first check at the hands of a butcher, when the Duke of Cumberland, who had backed Broughton heavily, was said to have lost £10,000. After that boxers sprang up in every part of the country, and although single-stick still was played at village fairs for a new hat, boxing became the favourite pastime. Looking back, we are sometimes tempted to regard the vigorous generation that encouraged prize-fighting as being somewhat brutal in its character, and indeed the amusements that were carried on simultaneously with this one could scarcely be called refined. Cocking was then in great favour, although it did not reach its zenith till after the battle of Waterloo, when a great main was fought, in which the birds were named respectively after the English and the French generals who were

in command on that occasion. The cock-pit was then a most popular institution. So in a lesser degree was the rat-pit, and the tiny black and tan terrier that would kill its own weight in rats in as many minutes as it weighed pounds was held to be a treasure among dogs. Badger-baiting was also a common amusement. In some places the badger was placed in a long coffin-shaped box, the sides of which were carefully soaped, so as to make it all the more difficult to pull him out. It was a pastime of the village rather than of the town, and great was the enthusiasm for the champion terrier that would rush in and drag out the fighting badger. But a refinement upon this was to place the animal under a stack of faggots in a space which just allowed him room to turn round. The dog then had nothing to go for except the punishing and muscular jaws of his enemy, and it did indeed require a game one to draw him out. Bull-baiting by that time had gone largely out of fashion, although many villages had their bull-ring, and baiting actually took place in the early nineteenth century. By then people had ceased to witness the extraordinary fights such as that between a pony and a bull, which the early historians of sport recount with so much zest. At fair and "statis," however, the old game of the cock-shy was still indulged in, the cock's body being buried in earth while his head and neck were free, and the object of the marksman was to kill him by a blow on the part left uncovered.

It might be seriously asked if we really have improved much on those brutal pastimes. The cock-shy may have become obsolete, but at Barnet Fair, and many another, there is a very ugly nigger who for a penny a shot exposes his head to be thrown at. He has, undoubtedly, a very hard skull, for we have seen him receive a blow that looked as if it would crack iron, but the refinement of those who take part in this modern pastime is not very self-evident. Again, for boxing at the present moment wrestling has been largely substituted, and here, again, we do not know that much improvement is to be noticed. The wrestling match is not a very beautiful spectacle in itself, since those who give the exhibitions are usually abnormally developed and beely to the point of causing disgust. The catch-as-catch-can style of wrestling most in vogue is quite as cruel as boxing, and nearly as dangerous. Very few people who have any claim to refinement or good taste would care to see for the second time two stout men struggling with each other on a mat, panting and blowing the while like "roaring" horses, and adopting means of tripping one another that would certainly be considered foul in any of the old-fashioned styles of wrestling. We say nothing against the pastime itself, but, on the contrary, admire it exceedingly. The only regret is that the revival is confined to the London music halls, and brought about mostly by foreigners who openly work simply for hire. The wrestling that would be good for the physique of the country is that which would be practised by the youth of every degree. What further tends to discredit these wrestling matches is a widespread suspicion that few if any of the contests are absolutely genuine. We cannot think that a crowd which assembles to watch two foreign wrestlers contending with one another in a London music hall is any advance upon the crowd which cheered Jem Mace or placed their money on a favourite breed of cocks.

For the sake of the country it is much to be desired that means may be found of popularising the old sports without making them into so many hunting-grounds for the professional. The deeds of a man like Hackenschmidt or Madrali are really of very little use to anybody. To achieve distinction against them it would be necessary that a man should give up his whole life to this pastime of wrestling, and the most athletic youth who treated wrestling only as an amusement would have no possible chance against them. It is somewhat different with the little Japanese wrestler who figures at the music halls. Here is a man without excessive strength or muscle, but who is gifted with wonderful skill and a thorough knowledge of anatomy. Hitherto the strongest of his adversaries has fallen before him, and the expertness to which he has attained shows what might be done in the way of physical education. He is scientific in the truest sense of the word. But though the attraction possessed by the sports we have referred to shows that the old Adam still exists in the British public, it is pleasant to remember that our amusements have been very much improved during the past twenty or thirty years. Golf, motoring, football, cricket are all outdoor pastimes which take one into the fresh air and improve both mind and body, while the bicycle provides exercise for thousands who in former days used to spend their leisure in loafing about public-houses.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of Lady Delamere with her little son, the Hon. Thomas Cholmondeley. Lady Delamere was Lady Florence Cole, younger daughter of the Earl of Enniskillen, and was married to Baron Delamere in 1899.



IN early life Mr. George Meredith was something of a recluse, but he has become more communicative in his old age, and on several occasions within the last few years has allowed himself to be interviewed by a newspaper correspondent. The latest of these emanations appeared in the *Daily Chronicle* on Tuesday last, when Mr. Meredith, as it were, spread himself over the whole world of thought of the present time. With many of his opinions we cordially agree, and as cordially disagree with others. As an example of the former we might refer to his advocacy of an aristocracy in literature. Mr. Meredith is absolutely right in saying that reviewing at the present moment is much too easy and urbane. Never at any time in English history has bad writing been praised so consistently, never has the best writing been so carefully neglected. We were going to say it is a duty, only the idea of duty is apt to be scorned in the modern journal; but if such an idea existed, it would cause newspaper men to consider far more carefully than they do the merits of such work as is placed in their hands. No one can estimate the effect that good literature has upon the advance of a nation, or of bad literature in its retardation. The minds of those who are accustomed to read day by day the stuff provided for them in cheap newspapers must be vulgarised to a degree, and rendered incapable of appreciating what is really fine in thought or imagination.

As an example of a point on which we disagree with Mr. Meredith we might take his remark that "the English people have little real love for Nature." This is a mere *ipse dixit*, and is of no value unless accompanied by the reasons that have led Mr. Meredith to such a conclusion. English literature is more saturated with love of Nature than any other, except Greek literature. In France, to which Mr. Meredith paid a special tribute—"she has given us a splendid literature; think of Montaigne, Rabelais, and Molière"—no such love of Nature has been manifested. You do not find it even in the writers quoted. Take Shakespeare, Milton, Burns, and is there not a million times more love of Nature exhibited in them than in Rabelais, Molière, or Montaigne? Again, if you walk round the Academy and round the Salon, it is certain that you will find far more Nature subjects treated in the English exhibition than in the French exhibition. If we apply another test, all open-air pursuits are more greatly prized in England than in any other country. Now these are the broad facts on which a generalisation might have been founded, and we do not hesitate to say that they are quite contradictory to Mr. Meredith's dictum.

In politics we do not very greatly admire the taste shown by the novelist. It might be very well in private conversation for him to canvass the merits of Lord Rosebery, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, and Mr. Asquith, but it is somewhat undignified for a man of his eminence to do so in what was meant for publication. But, indeed, his political prognostications are not to be taken very seriously. Speculation as to whether Mr. John Morley would go to the Irish Office and Mr. John Burns to the Board of Works can scarcely be described as practical politics, while the idea of making Professor Bryce Foreign Secretary approaches "parlously" near the ludicrous.

Yet if we differ on points of detail with Mr. Meredith, we recognise the greatness of the man in the passage which deals with the fear of death, and with religion in its highest aspect. We can very well understand what he meant when he said "There is Pan! You know something about Pan too. He has always been very close to me." It would have been strange indeed to have found in Mr. Meredith anything except a worshipper of the Great God Pan. Again, there is something both fine and hopeful in the passage, "Nature goes on her way, unfolding, improving, always pushing us higher, and I do not believe that this great process continues without some spiritual

purpose, some spiritual force that drives it on." It was a greater than he who said "your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams," and this is something more than a dream. It is what Mr. Meredith sees from the Pisgah height to which he has mounted.

Lord Curzon's assumption of the ancient office of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports was celebrated at Dover last week amid surroundings and ceremonies showing the high antiquity of the office and the unbroken continuity of English use and custom. The Cinque Ports, of Dover, Hastings, Hythe, Romney, and Sandwich, to which were added later Winchelsea and Rye, were constituted an almost separate dominion by William I., who built Dover Castle. They were a "County Palatine," with an entirely military, or rather naval, government, to defend the fighting frontier to the south, just as Durham was a County Palatine to guard against the Scots. Even to-day the Lord Warden summons his "corn barons" to meet him "in my castle of Dover," and proceeds then and thence to pass on to the Priory of St. Martin, to hold a "Court of Shepway." The men of the Cinque Ports were practically free from taxes in return for their services in providing ships. It is not generally known that to get crews they could draw on the inland villages as well as those on the coast. These places—among them Lydd, Goresand, and Dengemars—were called "members" of the Cinque Ports.

The standard as to what is ancient and interesting in reference to buildings necessarily alters with time as the world goes on. But the many references to Walmer Castle, the official home of the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, cannot fail to raise a question as to the preservation of ancient military works later than what is known as "Gothic." Henry VIII., for instance, built a great number of forts of the "transition period" between the days of arrows and of cannon. Of these Walmer is the largest and finest; but there are many others which are interesting architecturally, and also picturesque. Take, for instance, the forts built by him at Yarmouth, in the Isle of Wight, shortly after the place was burnt by the French. The buildings at the back are of admirable Tudor design in brick, with one of the finest sculptured Royal arms, supported by griffins and carved in stone, to be seen anywhere. East Cowes Castle is another of his forts, and also Calshot, which was built with stone from Beaulieu Abbey. There are many reasons why these should be preserved as historical and architectural mementoes. It is a question, too, whether some of the Martello towers built in Pitt's days should not also be preserved.

A timely protest is being made against the action of the Bridges Committee of the London County Council in removing from Waterloo Bridge the iron lamps, with laurel crowns, designed by the builder of the bridge, and substituting new and bad electric light standards in their place. It is also said that the old ones were made from captured French cannon. The exceeding badness of the modern street ironwork in London, from gas-lamps to pillar-boxes and cast-iron railings, contributes largely to give a look of commonness to the streets. At present practically the whole of the street lamps of London are about to be "electrified." It seems a good opportunity to reconsider the question of their design. A "taste committee" should have no difficulty in inviting competition and in deciding. If anyone doubts the necessity, a glance at the new standards in the fine avenue leading to the Victoria Memorial will probably convince him.

YOU AND THE ROSE.

Your gift was kind, the rose divine
In your sweet bosom where it lay,
But when you gave it unto mine
Why did its beauty stray?
Its charm—was it alone in you,
In your lithe form and witching face?
I know not, I, but, sure, 'tis true
It left with you its grace.

LILIAN STREET.

The dangers which seem to be inseparable from motoring have been sadly exemplified in the accident by which Sir William Henry Rattigan, M.P. for North-east Lanark, lost his life. As far as can be judged, it was one of those misfortunes for which no one can be blamed. The car was going at the very easy speed of ten miles an hour, and what precisely happened will probably be shown at the inquest. What we do know is that there was a sharp turn in the road; that something happened to the carriage, and Sir William with great force was hurled against the glass window in front, and killed instantaneously, while his wife and the chauffeur were badly hurt, and had to be rescued from under the car. The accident took place near Biggleswade.

Sir William Rattigan was in his sixty-second year, and was called to the Bar in 1873, after which he filled many important posts in India. He was knighted in 1895, and two years later became a Queen's Counsel. His politics were those of a Liberal Unionist, and his death makes a vacancy in North-east Lanark, a constituency that he failed to carry in 1900, but won in a bye-election that occurred through the death of Mr. Colville, the late member, when it will be remembered there was a remarkable three-cornered contest, in which Mr. C. B. Harmsworth figured with Mr. P. Smillie, a Labour candidate.

The dangers that have to be encountered by those who go down to the sea in ships have received one more vivid and terrible illustration in the loss of the Scandinavian emigrant ship *Norge*. The vessel had on board 700 emigrants, Norwegians, Danes, Swedes, Finns, and Russians, with a crew of eighty under the command of Captain Gundel of Copenhagen. It left Christiansund on June 26th, and all went well until the Tuesday following, when, in foggy and wet weather, the ship struck upon a sunken rock, and twenty minutes afterwards went to the bottom. It would serve no good purpose to describe the scene that followed. Both the captain and his crew appear to have acted with a bravery and self-denial worthy of their calling, but it was only to be expected that among a miscellaneous crowd of emigrants, many of whom were women and children, there would be a scramble for the boats. Luckily no heavy sea was running, and, according to the latest accounts, over 100 survivors have been landed at Stornoway, among whom is the captain. He stuck to his ship like a man, but after it sunk came to the surface, and, despite a severe injury to his leg, managed to swim into safety. After encountering much hardship in an open boat, he and those who were with him, consisting of twenty-eight young children, thirteen women, and a number of men, eventually landed at St. Kilda. As we write, it is not absolutely certain that some of the others may not have been saved, but the probability is that over 600 people have met their death. As far as one can see, no blame is to be attached to anyone. The catastrophe is due simply to one of those accidents against which modern invention has found no barrier, and which are likely to continue as long as human beings traverse the ocean.

The British working men who have been taken over on a four-days' trip to Paris appear to have enjoyed themselves thoroughly. On Monday President Loubet received a deputation from them at the Elysée and made a very interesting speech. He naturally referred to the *entente cordiale* of the two nations, and remarked, "There is one who took a still more considerable part in it—I have the right and pleasure to say so—and that is his Majesty King Edward VII." Undoubtedly, whatever else the King may be, he has earned the reward promised in the best of the Beatitudes, "Blessed is the peacemaker." But after kings and diplomatists have done their best there still remains the co-operation of the people, and such an excursion as that which has been made by these British working men must do a great deal to establish and strengthen kindly relations between the two countries. If we are to judge from the speech which Mr. Hall, one of the delegates, made in reply to Sir Edward Monson, they will carry away very pleasant memories of Paris. He was sure "they would all bear him out when he said that their common feeling was that such visits as this ought to take place at least twice a year, each visit lasting, not for four days, but six months," a remark as wise as it was witty.

Some special interest attached to Speech Day at Harrow School this year. In the first place there was a change of governors, Lord Peel retiring, and his place being filled by Sir Kenelm Digby, who was at one time in the scarcely less honourable position of Captain of the Eleven. In the second place there was a special interest in the attention drawn by the head-master to the proposition to acquire for the school some 250 acres of land lying to the eastward of Harrow, in order to preserve it from the hands of the builder. Eighty thousand pounds is the total sum required for the purchase, and of this £25,000 has been already subscribed, and another £20,000 has been promised on condition that the required total is made up.

As if to prove once again the variability of the British climate, June this year, in striking contrast to the same month of 1903, has been unusually dry. With regard to the number of days on which rain fell there is little to choose, as even last year the wet days were few, but the aggregate falls this year were far below the average amount, and were altogether insignificant compared with those of 1903. London, which a year ago was notorious for having the heaviest fall in the whole kingdom, was among the driest places this year. But it is not only in the rainfall that June of 1904 showed an improvement. The mean temperature was 2deg. or 3deg. higher over the greater part of the country, and the number of hours of

sunshine considerably more. Yet as late as the 28th an exceptionally low minimum temperature occurred in the Midlands. At Nottingham during the early morning of that date the screened minimum thermometer registered a reading of 35deg., or only 3deg. above the freezing point. As the sky was clear at the time, there is not the slightest doubt that had a thermometer been exposed on the grass it would have recorded several degrees of frost.

The dryness and, latterly, the warmth of the last three weeks have brought all the fruit on with a rush together. Strawberries, gooseberries, currants (both red and black), cherries, and raspberries are pouring into the market in vast abundance. Consequently, there is every prospect of abundance of very cheap fruit for the next ten days, to be followed by scarcity. It is much to be hoped that means will be found before long for the cheap storing of the surplus of our fruit fields, as has been done for the storage of apples in the United States. What the mass of the public want most is cheap and abundant fruit in August at the seaside; strawberries and most of the cherries are then unobtainable. Something, however, might perhaps be done by planting late kinds, especially of cherries.

BREAD AND CHEESE AND BEER.

Of all estates that dot the sea,
The one to me most dear
Is England, with her pathways green,
And bread and cheese and beer—
Old England with her daisied fields,
And bread and cheese and beer.

The parson caught me at the stile;
Cried he, "My pow, come here!"
"O yea," quoth I, "when you preach fine
As does the morning air,
And leave me only tired o' foot,
Content with bread and beer."

Old squire came cant'ring o'er the mead
To greet me with a peer;
Laughed I, "I love the plain man's ease
And green upholst'ry near,
Where brooks and hares and youngers run,
And sweet Peg brings the beer."

O, when I from this world away,
No pond'rous slab o'er me!
But just a strip of local oak,
With this for memory—
A strip whereon some kindly hand
Carves this in memory:

Here lies an honest Englishman,
Who did no mortal fear;
Who loved his wife, nor once in life
Scorned bread and cheese and beer;
Who loved his wife, nor e'er in life
Scorned bread and cheese and beer."

RICHARD HAVERBRACK.

Quite one of the features of the bazaar at the Albert Hall in aid of the Victoria Hospital was the excellent shooting at a miniature rifle range of some of the lady competitors. The competitions were under the management of Mr. Walter Winans and Mr. H. Claude Hay. The chief prize, a bracelet set with diamonds and sapphires, was won by Mrs. Strachey, but not until after shooting off a tie with three others. And these four were equal, with the remarkably good total each of twenty-three out of a possible twenty-five.

The news of the sudden death of Tom Emmett, in his sixty-third year, will have been read with genuine regret by many a cricketer of the generation that has dropped out of an active part in the game, and also by a few that are still on the active list. It is sixteen years ago that Emmett retired from representing Yorkshire in the field, and his service for the county began in 1866. At that time he was a very fast left-hand bowler, but in later years his pace moderated a good deal without any loss of efficiency. He was a sound bat, too, and a good and hard-working field, a very cheery fellow, and generally well beloved. He went three times to Australia representing English cricket.

When a newspaper comes to publish its four thousandth number it fairly deserves to be congratulated, and all the more so if, like the *Athenæum*, it can look back to the past with the assurance that the opinions expressed in it and the work it has done generally have always been of a nature to instruct and improve human society, that it has pandered to no evil appetite or corrupt taste on the part of the public. Such a claim can very

well be put forward by our contemporary. Since the days when John Sterling wrote in it it has had for its contributors a great proportion of the leading literary people of the time, and even its detractors have had no serious criticism to make upon it, the most amusing being the phrase of "R. L. S.," which had more fun than earnest in it, "Golly, what a paper!"

Mr. R. Bagot, writing to a contemporary *apropos* of the wild goats in the Cheviots, says that there are wild goats on his estate of Bagot's Park, as far south as Staffordshire. There are also a number in the great Forest of Brecknock in Wales, and

many in Achill Island. But it would be very interesting to know when the goat, as a milch animal kept in flocks, ceased to be part of the ordinary livestock of the farms of England. In that part of the Domesday Book which deals with Essex, the flocks of goats are regularly mentioned as part of the stock in a great many parishes. Yet to-day Essex does not seem in the least the class of county in which goats would be valued. We believe that the goats were probably kept in the neighbourhood of the great forests of the day, where they got a living largely by browsing on the thorns and other shrubs of those pathless jungles of Old England.

SUMMER CLOUDS.

By FIONA MACLEOD.

FOR one who has lived so much among the hills and loves the mountain solitude it may seem strange to aver that the most uplifting and enduring charm in Nature is to be found in amplitude of space. Low and rolling lands give what no highlands allow. If in these the miraculous surprise of cloud is a perpetual new element of loveliness, it is loveliness itself that unfolds when an interminable land recedes from an illimitable horizon, and, belonging to each and yet remote from either, clouds hang like flowers, or

drift like medusæ, or gather mysteriously as white bergs in the pale azure of arctic seas.

We are apt to be deceived by the formal grandeur of mountains, by the massed colours and contours of upbuilt heights, whether lying solitarily like vast sleeping saurians, or gathered in harmonious, if tumultuous, disarray. There is a beauty that is uniquely of the hills. The mountain lands have that which no lowland has. But in that company we shall not find what the illimitable level lands will afford, what inhabits the wilderness, what is the revelation of the desert, what is the lovely magic of the horizons of the sea. By the sombre reaches of the Solway, in the fen lands of East Anglia, in the immensity of the great bog which cinctures Ireland, in the illimitable lowland from Flanders to the last brine-whitened Frisian meadows, I have seen a quality of aerial beauty that I have not in like loveliness elsewhere found. Who that in mid-ocean has long watched the revelation of distance and the phantasmagoria of cloud during serene days, or from island shores looked across limitless waters till the far blue line seemed lifted to the purple-shadowed bases of leaning palaces, can think of an excelling loveliness? Who that has seen the fourfold azure, in east and west, in north and south, over the desert, and watched the secret veils of a single pavilion of rose-flusht cumulus slowly be undone, till the vision is become a phantom, and the phantom is become a dream, and the dream is become a whiteness and stillness deep-sinking into fathomless blue, can forget that the impassive beauty of the wilderness is more searching and compelling than the continual miracle of wind-swept Alp and cloud-shadowed highland; that it has, in its majesty of silence and repose, that which is perpetual on the brows of Andes and does not pass from Himalaya?

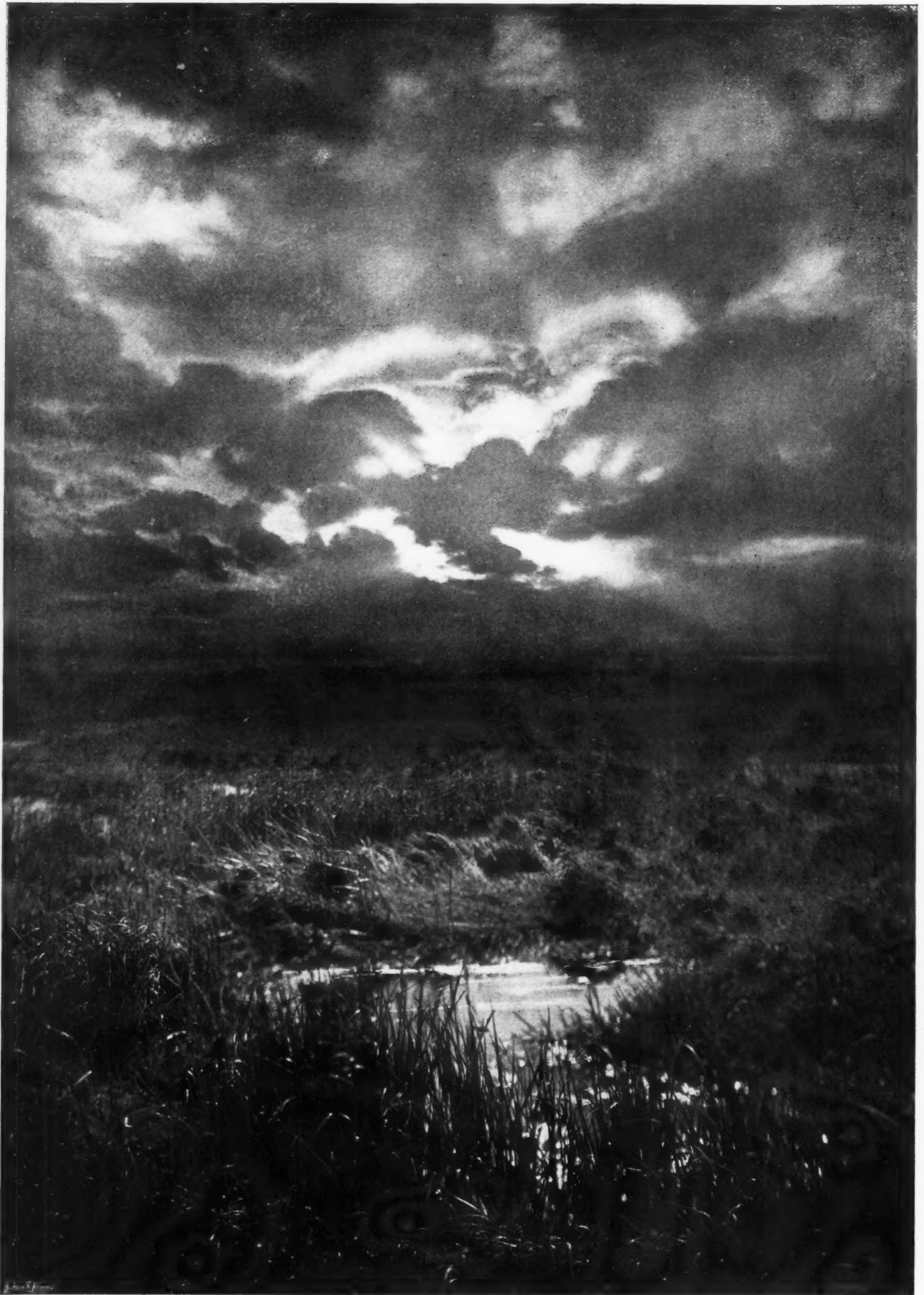
Perhaps in sheer beauty of pictorial isolation clouds are most lovely when viewed above sea horizons, from shores of islands, or promontories, or remote headlands. In the South this beauty is possibly more dream-like, more poignantly lovely, than in the North. Certainly, I have nowhere known cloud beauty excelling that in the Mediterranean and Ionian seas, viewed from the Spanish coast, from the Balearic Isles, over against the mountain-bastions of Sardinia and Corsica, from the headlands of Sicily, where Ithaka and Zante are as great galleys



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THE SPACIOUS FIRMAMENT.

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in a magic ocean, where for weeks at midsummer the wine-dark waters are untroubled between the cliffs of Hellas and the sands of Alexandria. Perhaps. It is difficult to say of any region that there beauty is more wonderfully revealed than elsewhere. It comes, and is present, and is upgathered; as the wind, that has no home, that the shaken reed knows, that crumbles the crests of ancient hills; as the rainbow, which is the same aerial flame upon Helicon, upon Ida, on the green glen of Aghadoe, on the steep of Hecla in the Hebrides, that gives majesty and wonder to the village green, and delivers mystery on the horizons of the frequented common. It is like light, whose incalculable arrivals are myriad, but which when most steadfast is most dreamlike, a phantom; as moonlight on the mysterious upturned face of great woods; or as when, on illimitable moors, the dew glistens on the tangled bent and pale flood of orchis where the lapwings nest; or in golden fire, as when at the solstice the sorrel in the meadows and the tansy in the wastes and the multitude of the dandelion are transmuted into a mirage of red and yellow flame; or in rippling flood of azure and silver, when the daysprings loosen; or in scarlet and purple and chrysoprase, when the South is as a clouded opal and the West is the silent conflagration of the world. There is not a hidden glen among the lost hills, there is not an unvisited shore, there is not a city swathed in smoke and drowned in many clamours, where light is not a continual miracle, where from dayset to dawn, from the rising of the blue to the gathering of shadow, the wind is not habitual as are the reinless, fierce, unswerving tides of the sea. Beauty, and Light, and Wind: they who are so common in our companionship and so continual in mystery, are as one in this—that none knows whence the one or the other is come, or where any has the last excellence or differs save in the vibration of ecstasy, or whither the one or the other is gone, when the moment, on whose wings it came or on whose brows it stood revealed, is no longer Eternity speaking the language of Time, but the silence of what is already timeless and no more.

It has been said, less wisely than disdainfully, that the chief element of beauty is destroyed when one knows the secret of semblance. Clouds, then, are forfeit in loveliness when one knows the causes of their transformation, their superb illusion? Not so. Has the rose lost in beauty, has she relinquished fragrance, for all that we have learned of her blind roots, the red ichor in her petals, the green pigment in her stem, her hunger that must be fed in coarse earth, her thirst that must be quenched in rain and dew, her desire that must mate with light? Is the rainbow the less a lovely mystery because we know that it is compact of the round, colourless raindrops such as fall upon us in any shower? Is the blue of an unclouded sky the less poignant for us if we know that the sunlight which inhabits it is there, not the yellow or red or suffused white which we discern, but itself an ineffable azure; that, there, the sun itself is not golden or amber or bronze, but violet-blue?

I remember it was complained once of something I wrote

. . . in effect, that cloud was the visible breathing, the suspended breath of earth . . . that the simile was as inept as it was untrue. None who knows how cloud is formed will dispute the truth in similitude: as to disillusion, can that be "unpoetic" which is so strange and beautiful a thing? The breath of a little child born in the chill of dawn, the breath of old age fading into the soon untroubled surface of the mirror held against silent lips, the breath of the shepherd on the hills, of the seaman on dark nights under frost-blue stars, the breath of cows on the morning pastures, of the stag panting by the tarn, the breath of woods, of waters, of straths, of the plains, of the brows of hills, the breath of the grass, the breathing of the tremulous reed and the shaken leaf . . . are not these the continual vapour of life; and what is cloud but the continual breath of our most deep and ancient friend, the brown earth, our cradle, our home, and our haven?

If any reader wish to *feel* the invisible making of the cloud that shall afterward rise on white wings or stream like a banner from mountain-bastions, let him stand on the slopes of a furrowed hill in this midsummer season. He will then feel the steady, upflowing tide of the warm air from the low-lying glens and valleys, a constant tepid draught, the breath of the earth. It will not be long before the current which shook yonder rose-flusht briar, which swayed these harebells as foam is blown, which lifted yonder rowan-branch and softly trampled this bracken underfoot, is gathered by scur and sudden corrie to the sheer scarps of the mountain-summit, to be impelled thence, as a geyser is thrown from an imperious fount, high into the cold and windy solitude. There it may suddenly be transmuted to an incalculable host of invisible ice-needles, and become cirrus; to float like thistledown, or to be innumerable scattered in wisps and estrays, or long "grey-mares'-tails," or dispersed like foam among vast, turbulent shallows. Or it may keep to the lee-side of the mountain-summit, and stretch far like a serrated sword, or undulatingly extend like a wind-narrowed banner, covering as a flag

the climbing armies of pine and boulder and the inscrutable array of shadow.

Cirrus . . . what a beauty there is in the familiar name: what beauty of association for all who love the pageant of cloud, and, loving, know somewhat of the science of the meteorologist. It is not alone in this: memory and imagination are alike stirred by the names of the three other of the four main divisions of Cloud—the Cumulus, the Stratus, the Nimbus. From the grey and purple of earthward nimbus to the salmon-pink bastions of the towering cumuli, those unloosened mountains of the middle air, those shifting frontiers of the untravelled lands of heaven, and thence to the dazzling whiteness of the last frozen pinnacles of cirrus, all loveliness of colour may be found. Neither brush of painter nor word of poet can emulate those apparitions of gold and scarlet, of purple and emerald, of opal and saffron and rose. There every shade of dove-brown and willow-grey, every subterfuge of shadow and shine, can be seen,



G. Bird.

THE SUN'S PARTING SMILE.

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The cloud-lover will know that these four great divisions are but terms of convenience. There are intervening children of beauty. Betwixt the earth-held, far-reaching nimbus and the climbing cumulus, whose forehead is so often bathed in the rarest fires of sunset, is the cumulo-nimbus. Between the cumulus and the stratus, whose habitual grey robe can be so swiftly made radiant in yellow and orange and burning reds, is the strato-cumulus: a sombre clan in the upper wilderness, heavy with brooding rains, moving in dark folds, less persuaded of the great winds which may drive the as silent seeming stratus, some ten thousand feet higher it may be, at the lightning speed of the eagle. Between the stratus and cirrus there are the cirro-cumulus and the cirro-stratus. The former is in one form as commonly welcome as beautiful, the familiar "mackerel-sky," harbinger of fair weather—in another, it is the soft dappled sky that moonlight will turn into the most poignant loveliness, a wilderness of fleecy



R. d'Huth.

ROLLING CLOUDS.

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hillocks and delicate traceries. The latter is that drift-ice or broken-up snow-field enmassing which is so familiar. Both march from horizon to horizon in ordered majesty, though when they seem like idle vapours motionlessly suspended along the blue walls of heaven they are rustling their sheaves of frost-fire armour, are soaring to more than twenty thousand feet above the earth, and are surging onward with impetuous rush at the rate of from seventy to eighty miles an hour.

I have called them the children of beauty. But these children of cloud are many. In each division, in each subdivision, there is again complex division. In a Gaelic story or poem-saga they are called "the Homeless Clan." It is a beautiful name. But they are not homeless whom the great winds of the upper world eternally shepherd, who have their mortal hour in beauty and strength and force, and, instead

of the havens and graves and secret places of the creatures of earth, know a divine perpetual renewal.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

MONSIEUR H. TAINE will ever create more interest than the usual foreign man of letters in England, if for no other reason, because of his "History of English Literature." In this book he showed an intimate knowledge, sympathy, and a critical insight that are conspicuously lacking in the work of others who have attempted the same task. From Voltaire down to Victor Hugo, Frenchmen have, for instance, written with little sense about our greatest poet. We are, therefore, very glad to welcome the second instalment of the *Life and Letters of H. Taine*, translated from the French by Mrs. R. L. Devonshire. They cover the period from 1853 to 1870, and though they contain much that an English reader cannot be supposed to care greatly for, there are many passages well worthy of consideration. Taine lived an extremely literary life, and his letters are saturated with criticism that is all the more acceptable because informal. Much of it is very clever also, as, for example, the following reference to Lamartine:

"You should have studied M. de Lamartine's style a little more; I think it fulsome; ideas are drowned in words. There are a quantity of *chaperoning* verses, which escort the others most decorously, but are only there as an accompaniment. One has to read passages over and over again in order to understand; the principal idea gets lost in the crowd. Whilst reading one forgets to think, one listens; it is the *Æolian harp* of style."

Here again is a fine bold sketch of Malherbe, whom he likens to

"the old soldier of the religious wars, writing without French models, obliged to create everything; frank, bold, and familiar in his speech, like a man of action writing with the point of his sword. His style is clean-cut and wiry, like the strong, bony frame of an old and adventurous warrior. Boastfulness suits his times and his profession. Imagination in Malherbe is scarce, but this harsh and dry soil lends exquisite beauty to the rare blooms it produces."

Taine wrote of Shakespeare with an insight and lucidity not excelled by Tisack and the other German critics who, at the intellectual awakening of Germany, drew so much inspiration from the English poet. Even Goethe himself in those well-

known passages in "Wilhelm Meister" appears to be a little trifling in comparison:

"This characteristic, as the Germans call it, is not local colour. All Shakespeare's *dramatis personæ* are Englishmen of the sixteenth century, and not Romans, Barbarians, or Italians. The same remark applies to Rembrandt, my favourite amongst painters. But they have that characterised originality for which I am seeking: they are true and living; they are real and complex beings, and not mere ideas. When I read Corneille and Racine, I hearken to eloquence, I am struck with the grandeur of certain answers or the grace of certain analyses. But I own that I do not see men."

How well Taine understood the creative methods of an artist has often been exemplified, and there are phrases which prove it once more in the passage we are about to copy, though, at the same time, it is curious that a man who understood the gift so much in others should never have exhibited much capacity for original work:

"I know some pictures of Poussin, of Raphael even, where the model seems to have been sitting for six minutes. Rembrandt and a few others, on the contrary, have seized this moment as it passes. It is the same with poets. Instead of the line and colour which is exclusively appropriate to a given idea, they find a word, a metaphor, a turn of phrase, a psychological detail, which can be found nowhere else, and only suits that particular moment. That, as I think, is what constitutes the life of a work of art. Amongst other works which seem to live, I will quote Plato, La Fontaine, Bossuet's 'Traité de la Concupiscence,' and, by modern writers, Alfred de Musset's 'Rolla' and 'Nuit d'Octobre,' Victor Hugo's 'Fantomes' and 'Chant du Cirque,' nearly the whole of Faust, and a number of short odes by Goethe; also many works by our minor poets, many little sixteenth century pieces, etc."

His opinion of most of our English writers is now thoroughly well known, and yet in these letters there are many illuminative passages which seem to clarify what read somewhat vaguely in his History. In a letter to Guizot he happens to refer to Charles Dickens. Now Dickens, whatever his merits may be, was antipathetic to the modern school of French novelists, even though it be perfectly true that in one of the most popular of them, Daudet, he found a close imitator; but the moralising,

the sentimentality, the over-accentuation which characterised his work have never been more lucidly exhibited than by Taine. He says :

"The man is a type, and teaches us much about English taste. Elegies or satires, a painfully acute sensitiveness, nothing is told simply and naturally. The characters are not liked for themselves, for the sake of logic, or for the pleasure of developing a force, as in Balzac. Dickens never forgets his moral for an instant; he praises, wounds, sneers, weeps, or admires, but never paints. He has not that indifference of the artist who, like Nature, produces good and evil, and cares for nothing but to produce much, to produce great things. He does not love passions for themselves; he only tries to develop the emotions of the heart, and to make family life and sentiments attractive."

Of course Dickens has many intelligent admirers in this country who will not be disposed to admit the truth of these remarks about him, but the absolutely dispassionate observer will, we think, agree with M. Taine. The passage about the indifference of the artist who, like Nature, produces good and evil, and cares for neither, is the keynote of a style of criticism fatal to Dickens. M. Taine might have put it otherwise, and said that to the great artist as to Nature herself there is neither good nor evil. Things happen, the event, as it were, flies forth colourless and unmeaning. The evil or the good is exclusively in the mind that receives it; it is colour added by an outside consciousness. But only writers of the very highest rank are able to realise this. It is so much easier, it comes so much more naturally, to reproduce prejudices and preformed ideas, and to play on beliefs that have become superstitions. The good or evil in a book ought simply to mirror that which is in human life.

We had marked many other passages for comment and quotation, but must content ourselves with two. One is a description of that interesting writer Gustave Flaubert, and runs thus :

"A tall, vigorous man, with square shoulders, a thick moustache, and a heavy appearance, not unlike a somewhat worn cavalry officer who has become addicted to tipping. Ponderous strength is the main feature of his conversation, tone, and gestures. There is nothing refined about him, but a great frankness and naturalness; he is a primitive man, a 'dreamer' and a 'savage'; these two last words are his own. He is an obstinate toiler, who strains his imagination and has to suffer the consequences."

The other is an equally vivid word-picture of Ernest Renan :

"He is, above everything, a passionate, nervous man, beset by his own ideas. He walked up and down my room as if he were in a cage, with the jerky tones and gestures of invention in full ebullition. There is a great difference between him and Berthelot, who is as quiet as a patient, labouring ox, chewing the cud of his idea and dwelling on it. It is the contrast between Inspiration and Meditation."

FROM THE FARMS.

CROP PROSPECTS.

IN the beginning of July it becomes just possible to form some idea of what the roots and grain are going to do in the course of the year, and on the whole the outlook at the present moment is distinctly favourable. A great deal of the hay has already been cut and saved, and the crop is an immense one. No doubt at present the price of it is low, but then hay is a necessary article of food on a farm, and the saving in feeding must be considerable. The cereal crops have made great progress during the last few weeks, and with a moderate amount of luck ought to turn out well. Beginning at the North, we find that in the Border counties the barley and oats are doing very well. The hay is not quite so good, owing to the fact that the clover did not come away well. These remarks hold true of the counties of Northumberland, Cumberland, and Durham. Oats have done very well in Yorkshire, and both there and in Lancashire the potatoes are in a satisfactory condition. The reports from the Midlands are not quite so good. Cold weather has kept back the growing crops in Staffordshire; in Leicestershire potatoes and turnips are late; the wheat is rather poor in Nottinghamshire; in Derbyshire it is complained that the potatoes are not forward; in Gloucestershire there is rust in the wheat and charlock in the barley; and the cereal crops are not very promising in Oxfordshire. The hop outlook is not very good in Kent, as the hops are backward and harried by insect pests. In Sussex the farmers are not

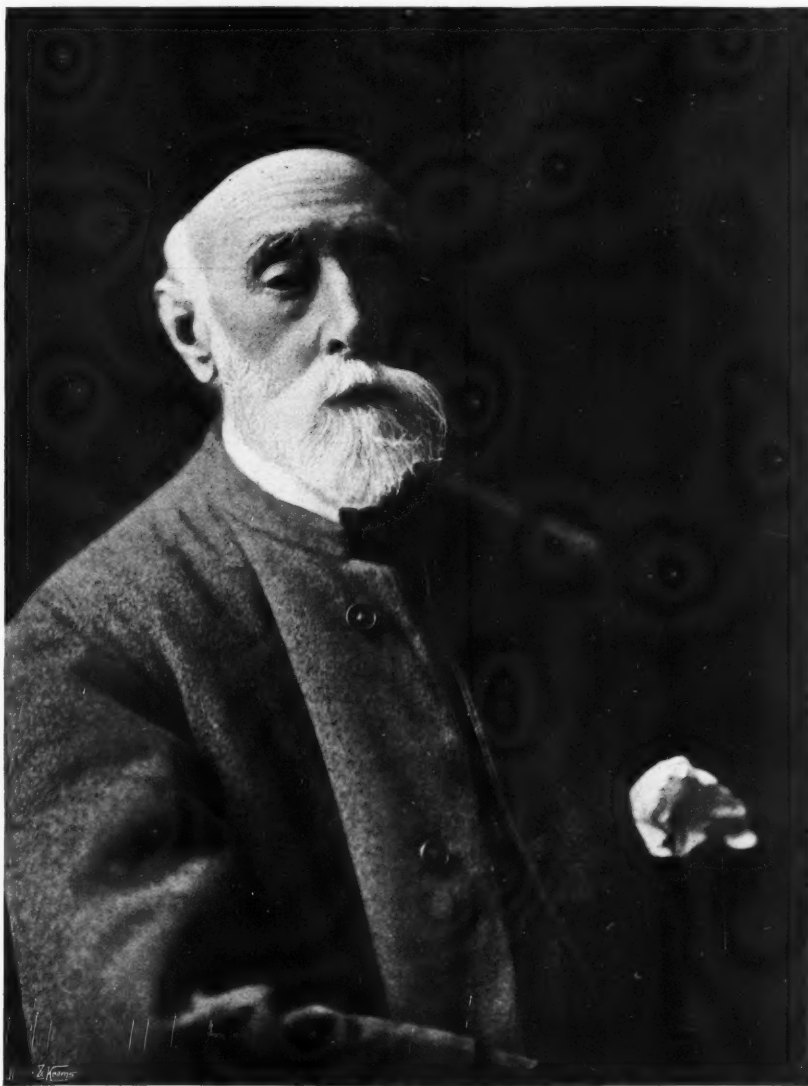
very optimistic, as the wheat is very much behind. The same may be said of the corn crops in East Anglia. They are reported as being thin and poor. However, it is early days yet, and should the fine weather continue, the crops may pick up to a considerable extent.

THE OUTLOOK IN IRELAND.

To a country so dependent on agriculture as Ireland, the state of the crops is a matter of vital importance. Now that we have entered on what is generally looked upon as the first of the harvest months, a fair guess may be made as to the probable outlook. June, taking it all in all, was hardly what might be called a favourable month, being too cold, with much hard east or north-east winds. On the whole, however, the cereal crops look remarkably well considering the late, cold spring, and given a few sunny weeks good crops may be expected. Hay is likely to prove a fine crop; in some of the best grass counties, Westmeath, to wit, hay-making has already commenced. In places, fields of mangolds and turnips may be seen singled out, and potatoes look remarkably well. Reports from Mayo, Down, and other of the wild western and northern counties also are very hopeful. Ireland has gained so much from the co-operative movement that we earnestly trust she will have a year of good crops so as to reap a real advantage.

A GREAT PAINTER.

AT a great age, yet till very near the end in all but full enjoyment of the genius that has made his fame, Mr. G. F. Watts has passed away from a world that has been made so much the richer by his life. By his art he was in closer touch with the great Italian school than any other British painter, and from his youth to his age his life was given up to art with a singular purity of devotion. His range was so wide that it is not easy to say whether he will be better known to posterity as the painter of a great gallery of men's portraits or of such big allegorical pictures as "Love



J. Caswall-Smith.

THE LATE MR. G. F. WATTS.

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and Death," "Love and Life," "Paolo and Francesca," and the like. In quite another style was the large picture of the dray-horse man with his horses and cart that all who used to go to the painter's studio in Kensington will remember without fail. Mr. Watts was both a great colourist and a great anatomist, and he brought to the service of his art that crowning gift of all, a quick and poetic imagination, that gave him at once his fertility and beauty of subject and his faculty of keeping the colour scheme in delightful harmony while carrying it to a very high note. Of our own colourists he admired none so much as the late Lady Waterford, of whom he remarked with enthusiasm to the present writer that she came nearer to the colouring of the great Venetians than any other painter we have seen. He had all the generous enthusiasm of the artistic nature, and would not even admit the charge of inadequacy against Lady Waterford's drawing, critical though his eye always was of the anatomy of his own figures. His genius for the anatomy of both the human and the equine figure found its full scope in the magnificent and colossal model of "Physical Energy" on the

plunging horse, which engaged his intermittent attention for very many years.

Towards the end of his days he lived more and more entirely at his country house near Guildford. He never went into Society in the ordinary sense of the phrase, and scrupulously declined all titles and public recognition of his genius; but he was always accessible to friends, and to his friends' friends, and always perfectly and simply charming and interesting to all who saw him. His art so wholly engrossed him that he had little time for pursuits outside it, and his habit, followed even in his old age, of rising at daylight in the summer mornings, in order to get the best of the sun for painting, is enough to show that it could leave him little margin. Nevertheless, some sketches of attitudes for the various strokes of the batsman at cricket, which adorn the walls of Lord's Pavilion, and are reproduced in the COUNTRY LIFE Library Cricket volume, are proof that the athletic games appealed to him, and that his eye could appreciate every quality of strength and grace that their practice showed. He died in perfect peace in his 87th year. H.

THE GLOW-WORM.

"Beneath the hedge and near the stream
A worm is known to stay,
That shows by night a lurid beam
Which disappears by day."

IN Nature things are met with now and then which, without partaking of the marvellous, are sufficiently out of the common to attract attention. Few of us will refrain from putting a head out of window if we know a rainbow is in sight, especially a double one. A good cracking thunder or hail-storm is another event which makes us leave our work or play to see what Nature is about; the wonder of a lark's nest in the turf, the terror of a death's-head moth, a night of shooting stars, the first hush of the snow, an angry sea, the moment of the sun's dip out of sight in clouded glory—all these are things that move us—we are obliged to notice them; but among the everyday miracles we enjoy, none thrills us more delightfully than the sight of a glow-worm's lamp beside our path at night.

It is so startling; a bank of damp and dewy grass or moss seems such an extraordinary place for the flicker of a flame. If we have never seen a glow-worm before, it puzzles us. How came it there? No one has passed this way, so it cannot be the cast-off fragment of a cigar, and there is a moonlight radiance about the flame that is quite unlike the red smoulder of tobacco-ash. We watch the phosphorescent star, and see it slowly move, and other little gleaming dots are marching too. There is no doubt about it now—the moving, gleaming wayside lights are glow-worms.

We had much better not stop to pick them up. Imagination here is better than too close acquaintance; except for its power of emitting light, the glow-worm is an altogether insignificant little creature, and viewed by the light of day—apart from the glamour of its spark—by no means particularly pretty to look at. Its colour, a dingy white, is unprepossessing, and we find that after all it is not a worm, but a beetle, and rather a crawly little beetle too. For some reason or other—perhaps envy—human beings never take kindly to other living creatures that have much more than the average amount of legs. We like them to have two, like ourselves and birds, or four, like dogs and horses. Once a creature runs to six legs or more we eye it with distrust, and a thing we really cannot stand with equanimity is the confusing number that prevents us from seeing which leg moves first. Professor E. Ray Lankester once tried to study the order in which the legs of centipedes moved, and came to the conclusion that if the animal had to study the question of which leg had to move first itself, it would never get on at all.

"A centipede was happy quite,
Until a toad in fun
Said, 'Pray which leg moves after which?'
This raised her doubts to such a pitch,
She fell exhausted in the ditch,
Not knowing how to run."

Fortunately for the glow-worm's peace of mind—and ours when we are studying it—the glow-worm, like all other beetles, is the possessor of six legs only, and they are all placed at the same end of its body—the head end. It would perhaps be well at this point to disarm criticism by owning at once that many of the remarks here made about the glow-worm are the result of personal observations, and not copied from books. They may, therefore, give quite wrong impressions, for we all know it is vain to trust to unassisted eyesight, and that one series of observation is practically worthless in matters of science; but they are interesting to the person who observes, and the more the "man in the street" looks closely at the glow-worm, the more he wonders at it. One of the odd things it does is to stand upon

these six legs, situated near the throat, so as to rear the rest of its body up into the air. It does this when it glows, which makes the little creature look like a small lighthouse.

Cowper, the poet, took a good deal of interest in the glow-worm, and, with many other Nature-lovers of his time, was puzzled to know what part of the worm it is that emits the light:

"Disputes have been and still prevail,
From whence his rays proceed,
Some give that honour to his tail,
And others to the head."

In these days, to the question of "heads or tails"? as applied to the light of the glow-worm, we should distinctly answer "tails," at all events not "heads." It is said, moreover, to be only the female glow-worm that burns a night-light, and that the males are queer little things of quite a different size and shape. Perhaps the lady glow-worm illuminates to show her consort where she may be found, or by way of encouragement when he is diffident. Professor Emery's observations among the pleasant meadows that surround Bologna, show that the light of the glow-worm really is used frequently as a love-signal. No doubt our English glow-worms are equally ready and intelligent in making the most of such powers of attraction as they possess.

The highest authorities have bidden us go to the ant and learn her lessons; it is a pity some of us cannot take hints from the glow-worm, who has mastered a difficulty which is puzzling the wisest human heads to-day, namely, that of obtaining light without heat, or with so little heat that it is practically not worth considering. If hundreds and thousands of glow-worms could be collected, enough to light up a ballroom, the dancers could revel in the soft clear living radiance, and keep their rooms as cool as cucumbers. The more we know about light, and of the waves and vibrations that go to the making of it, the more we wonder at the glow-worm; so small, so frail an entity, how does she manage her task so easily? Should we have the curiosity to take one up and handle it, we find it cold and clammy.

Sir Oliver Lodge has lately called attention to a curious fact. He noticed "that during a thunder-storm a glow-worm extinguished its flash for a second or a second and a-half before each flash, relighting at an equal interval after the flash." How truly feminine that touch of small economy; one cannot imagine a masculine glow-worm being guilty of it. A straw will show which way the wind blows, and this trifle goes to support the notion that the glow-worm whose light-flash we admire really is a lady. There is no doubt the luminous property is really under the control of the glow-worm, for even when approached it may frequently be seen to diminish or extinguish the pretty flame.

And what is the luminous substance made of? This is a puzzling question, and up to the present date no very precise results have been arrived at by investigators. That it is phosphorus in some form or other appears certain, and the latest experimenter (Jousset de Bellesene) asserts his belief that it is "no other than phosphoretted hydrogen gas stored up in the cellular tissue, and in direct communication with the nervous and respiratory systems." Dr. Chambers, in his Encyclopædia, tells us the glowing substance is capable of being mixed with water, that warm water increases its brilliancy, and that if placed in hydrogen gas it sometimes detonates. It is rather remarkable that when a glow-worm and a spider were once put in the same box and sent on a railway journey together, only one of the travellers arrived, and that one was the glow-worm. What could have become of the spider? Glow-worms browse

daintily on tender blades and leaves; they never feed on spiders. Is it possible that the glow-worm, voluntarily or involuntarily, could have suffocated the poor spider and shrivelled him up?

Philosophers and story-tellers, as well as scientific investigators, have plenty to say about the glow-worm. Goldsmith speaks of her as "that little animal which makes such a distinguished figure in the descriptions of our poets." Shakespeare sings of her as lighting up the nightly revels of the dancing elves, and in Hans Andersen's delightful story of the party at the Elfin-hillock, the accomplishment of the king's third daughter was knowing how to bake, and brew, and cook, and "how to lard the Elfin-dumplings with glow-worms."

Up here in Norfolk the glow-worm is not so very common, though in genial summers she may be seen sometimes even upon the sand-drifts of the seashore—so say the country-folk—which is about the last place those would expect to see her who are used to noticing her lambent flame upon moist banks among the hop gardens of Kent and Sussex. But, wherever she may

wander, the little creature, in her own place and in her own surroundings, is beautiful. Amid them let us leave her, never attempting to transport the crawling star of wondrous blue into even the dampest and most luxurious of our garden rockeries or banks of fern, for it is our experience that in a short time she will vanish. Mysterious appearances and disappearances on the part of the glow-worm, however, need never cause surprise, for it is one of the amazing company of transformation insects, like the butterfly and dragon-fly, who are allotted more than one body in the same world. The larvæ of the glow-worm do but faintly resemble the perfect insect, and instead of being exceedingly small eaters, of quiet habits and strictly vegetarian, are ferocious little creatures, very slightly luminous, who attack and devour the smaller snails and slugs, while the male, who is as lively as he can be, has well-developed wings and a swift manner of flight. In short, the glowing beetle we pick up on the roadside and place upon our watch-glass, to see the hour, in other stages of its existence would almost certainly by most of us be passed unrecognised.

F. A. B.

SHOOTING IN ALLAHABAD.

A TIGER, a leopard, a couple of good sambur, with a possible bear, some black buck and ravine deer if I cared to go after them. This was my dream as I slowly crawled along in an East India Railway "express" train in response to a hospitable invitation from H.H. the Maharajah of Rewah to spend my Christmas in his preserves. Allahabad Station reminded me of King's Cross on the eve of August 12th; there were not quite so many sportsmen, but the number of their guns and the excitement of their numerous servants made up for this. At Sutna Station I found a charming rubber-tired victoria, with a fine pair of Australian horses and a smart gold-laced coachman, awaiting me; also a conveyance which reminded me of a diligence in some very out-of-the-way part of Switzerland, with a cage fixed on the top of it; the former for my servants, the latter for my baggage. Relays of horses were posted every six miles, and the little afternoon's drive of thirty-six miles was done under the four hours.

Govinghur was my destination, and here I found an imposing camp, as the Agent to the Governor-General for the Central Provinces was paying his official visit to Rewah. Christmas Day was devoted to sports, which the Maharajah personally conducted on horseback, and the event of the day was an elephant race. The pace at which these unwieldy-looking creatures lumbered along was considerable. They were urged by the yells and prods of the mahout, and also by men on foot with long spears. The beasts evidently quite understood what



ELEPHANT READY FOR THE CHASE.



REWAH HAWK AND ELEPHANT ATTENDANT.

was going on, and their furious dashes at each other could hardly have escaped being classed as foul riding.

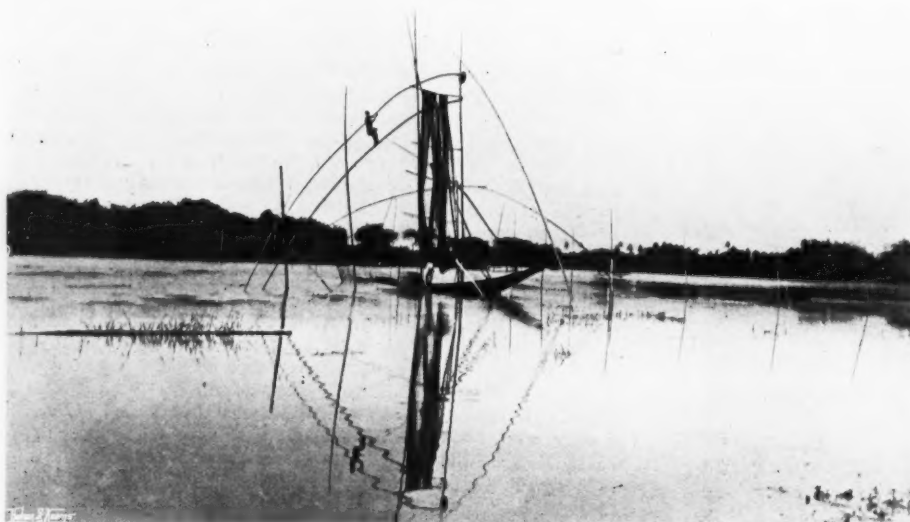
Hawking is one of the favourite amusements in Rewah, and amongst the spectators at the sports there were several with hawks on their arm. I photographed one, giving him as a companion one of the men who acted as "whipper-in" to the elephants during the race. Next day the private preserves were driven. The various passes up which game is expected to go are each commanded by a comfortable stone-built stand. The beaters on foot were over 1,000, and besides these there were a troop of Rewah Cavalry and about thirty elephants. Much was expected, and my hopes rose as I heard heavy firing on my right; but nothing came my way except some "lady" sambur, accompanied by one stag too small to shoot. I used my camera instead of my rifle. The total bag only consisted of two sambur stags. One bear was missed, and two leopards were said to have broken back, besides many sambur. A day at the ducks came next, then more sports, including a camel race; this, unfortunately, took place too late in the afternoon to photograph it. The only thing they seemed to me to be like was a water-logged ship rolling in a heavy sea.



A FINE SAMBUR STAG.

After the departure of the Maharajah and the officials, I betook myself to the jungles in search of big game. One morning we were very close on a large tiger; his pugs were so fresh that the sand was falling in at the edges, but he turned into the thick jungle, where tracking was beyond my powers, and the men I had with me either could not or would not—the latter I think—follow him up. On the way back to camp, late, when the light was failing, a curious grey thing ambled in sight, which caused considerable excitement amongst my followers. I did not know it by the name they gave it, but understood that its destruction was desired. A .577 bullet effected this, and I found it was a hyena, the first I had seen, though many a time I have been disturbed by them in camp at night. Next day they collected a curious band of men and boys, about 300 in all, aged from ten to seventy, who beat large slices of the huge jungles where sambur were. One fine stag came my way, and I was fortunate enough to get him—a lucky shot, as the wood was very thick.

On the way back to camp, a long shot in the dusk brought down a fairly good black buck, and next morning I struck camp and went into Rewah city. The fishing-net arrangement is perhaps not quite sport, but it is both effective and ingenious. The bamboo framework is on the edge of a large lake. From this a large net is let down. A man sits up top on watch, and when he sees enough fish over the net he runs down the bamboo, as shown in the photograph, with a pole from the frame of the



A LAKE FISHERMAN.

net attached to him; thereby he acts as a counterbalance to the net, and his weight raises it out of the water. J. A.

READING BY PRESCRIPTION.

VERY learned men have said, in their pride, that the number of truly great books in the world is extremely small—that a few narrow shelves suffice to store all that need be chosen for informing and inspiring the most capable mind. This we can all believe very readily, but not without feeling that to be able to say as much ourselves with decency and contentment we must first read three thousand books at least, and do so with minds for which only the very best of them have a profitable use. And in that reflection there is a great deal more than meets the eye. Yet good counsel

may be drawn from the conclusions of the well-read and the wise; and so desirous were some of them, a few years ago, to impress their advice on a generation eager for books and unversed in the economy of reading, that what pages must be taken and what might be left became a veritable "topic of the day." There



THE ELEPHANT RACE.

were controversies and consultations, but with little or no departure from one point: the number of best books and such as sufficed for a liberal education might be fixed at a hundred.

But why a hundred? And why could there be no extension of the list when it appeared that the priesthood of letters disagreed as to the proper constitution of half that number? The way in which the matter was argued revealed that adding fifty more best books to a well-revised hundred would have pretty nearly settled the war of exclusion against inclusion. But to the sensitive minds of all concerned that would not do. A broken hundred thrown out from the first ring-round sum was as an open boundary, an unfinished wall. As well two hundred as a hundred and fifty; and to proffer a selection of two hundred best books would lower the proud thought that all the great literature of the world can be packed in the corners of one little room. That which is most precious is ever rare. They stuck to one hundred as the highest possible figure. Within its limit a studious servant of his fellow-men (once known as St. Lubbock, but since promoted to the House of Lords) undertook to furnish the sufficing list. The thing was done—with more groaning, probably, than was ever confessed; and it must have answered, though in an obscure way. After years of a half-forgotten

existence it is thought worthy of renewal. Again the list comes out, with here an addition and there an excision; for still the best books are a hundred, and such as do not appear in Lord Avebury's roll of honour may be regarded as secondary or superfluous reading more or less.

It is in several particulars a strange list, but we need not quarrel with it. We may say of it, indeed, without meaning to be at all jocular, that for minds that like such guidance it is just the sort of guidance that they like. There are many good honest pedestrian souls who are as conscious of the duty of mental as of physical exercise, and, under direction, are as ready to take a "constitutional" from Confucius to Emerson, from Firdusi to Keble, as to do their daily six-mile country walk. For such minds, direction of the kind that Lord Avebury provides is necessary both as stimulus and guidance. To follow it as closely as stomachic and other circumstances permit, and yet not to go beyond its conventionalities and respectabilities for other fare, will prove sufficient, and of course entirely safe, if but one slight danger is avoided—a danger of priggishness.

But for minds the more capable, out-looking, and athirst, no hundred best books will do, nor any five hundred. For them the best reading is wild reading—taken up anywhere and everywhere, picked over with bird-like suspicion, and tasted and rejected or tasted and devoured as sympathy, curiosity, and natural appetite decide. The advantage of being "let loose" in a wilderness of books (library so-called), which so many minds have gratefully remembered as theirs in the days of their youth, is this advantage and no other. In these times it is more readily attainable, in one shape or another, than ever it was before. With a little pains anyone of half the population may find himself in a wilderness of books, where he may pick and choose with as much of the gusto of Charles Lamb as may be in him. Some guidance of course is needed; but who is without it?—who that has any practised love of reading? No fear is there that the foremost writers of the world will remain unknown to any such person, or be neglected for want of a reminding list of them. The name and the fame and the good to be got from the greater books of antiquity are familiar wherever a translation of them can be read intelligently. That the works of Dante, Cervantes, Goethe, should be searched for their fine gold, is understood by every adult Briton who is likely to attempt it on any persuasion. Of course, the same thing may be said of all the more refulgent writers in our own English tongue; and it is the merit of the best of them—of Shakespeare most, who stands at the head of all—that they are caviare to nobody. No rare subtlety of mind is needed to understand them, nor anything but a clear intelligence and a fair knowledge of English. With such an equipment any mind can take possession of what they have to bestow.

And that being so, it would seem better work to make out a list of second-best books, bringing forward some that are not so much known and yet would stand in many minds as do the humbler affections along with such as rise to grandeur. To

every mind the reading that is best for it and is most enjoyed: that is the golden rule, and some books which deservedly rank with the highest have but little use, little pleasure for minds as worthy as any, though intellectually they lie on the foot-hills or in the plains. Lucretius is a much greater poet than Goldsmith, and criticism would tell us that what is known of Sappho's verse far transcends the little song of Campbell's which was copied into this paper a week or two since. Yet the "Deserted Village" and the "Traveller," poems which have not lost their beauty though the critics of to-day have no praise for them, move heart and head to as good effect as Lucretius where that poet stands too high; while as for the "Soldier's Dream," it has no classic and no mystic grace, but what more educational to thought, imagination, sympathy, can be found in a like number of lines? A dozen hymns could be named, not one of them written as poesy and few with any considerable pretension as such, which have lifted tens of thousands of souls to greater heights of spiritual perception than Wordsworth has helped us to at his best.

Whether agreeable or not, "a regular course of reading" may be good to exercise and discipline the mind (though that should be done sufficiently while learning to read), and it is indispensable, of course, where a dominant taste demands gratification, or where some "object in life" has to be attained. But a general prescription like Lord Avebury's is of little use generally. It can only answer to satisfaction where a man would fill his head for the reason that he would furnish an empty bookcase: to amend imperfection and remedy unsightliness. So many standard books, and the thing is done; nothing remains but occasional resort to the dusting-brush. But a student of that sort is little more of a reader than is the piece of furniture that contains his books; and not for his sake would Lord Avebury have taken so much trouble had he known it. His thought was for such as have the true fire in their breasts; and when we come to these what is to be said? Above all, that only by a range of wild reading, with liberty to stoop as the bee does to the lowliest herbs, can each mind choose what is best for its own edification and delight. There are some that take neither profit nor pleasure from a book unless instructed thereby in matters of fact expressed in the language of the same. Others are only moved to good purpose by a particular study or group of studies—physical science for example. Invention delights them, but only such as can be turned to practical account, and they only allow imagination to be enlightenment when it is productive of profiting substantialities. At a wide distance from these—a distance filled with scores of intermediary tribes, all with a differing compound of intellect and feeling—are those minds which have as much dislike of material facts as the Celtic Revivalists pretend to; who prefer intuition to experiential knowledge; and who are content with nothing till they find in it a soul of mystery. If there are to be lists of best books, each of these tribes should have its own; but that done, every individual mind that is hungry and thirsty and worthy to read will go afield for its own selection. F. G.

DUCK-BREEDING AT NETHERBY.

I.—EXPERIMENTS WITH TEAL.

FOR many years the great scale on which wild ducks proper have been reared at Netherby has attracted the attention of the shooting world. Sir Richard Graham has shown that as many as 10,000 mallard can be reared artificially on one large estate, and also how it should be done. The result has been to encourage owners in all parts of England to develop the wildfowl capabilities of their estates, and as the artificially bred stock nearly always attracts other wild ducks, the result has led to a very general increase of wildfowl in places where they were formerly decreasing or hardly seen at all.

Sir Richard Graham is now following up his former enterprise by one which seems the logical sequel to it. In other words, he has for some seasons been trying to ascertain how far the other surface-feeding ducks, such as teal, wigeon, pintail, shoveller, and



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PART OF THE NEW DECOY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

gadwall, can be artificially reared, or induced to stay and breed and make a fixed home on a property by judicious encouragement. In the course of these enquiries he has also succeeded in obtaining hybrids, some fertile and others not, of an interesting, and in some cases an unexpected, kind.

The character of the estate of Netherby is of great assistance. Between its centre and the seacoast of the Solway Firth lies the famous Solway Moss. A "moss" is unlike any other natural feature except itself, and one confined almost entirely to the western marches and the counties of Cumberland, Westmorland, and Lancashire. Suffice it to say that it is something between a moor and a marsh, with high heather, quantities of water held in soak as if in a sponge, immense depths of peat, very deep and tall rushes round the edges, and pools, pits, and springs in the moss itself. This moss, where in 1542 the ancestors of the present Sir Richard Graham and of Sir Richard Musgrave commanded the English and routed the Scotch, once burst and overflowed hun dreds of acres of fertile land. At present, though drier than it once was, it makes a perfect harbour for wildfowl. At its side a field, mainly covered with masses of deep rushes.



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SHELDRAKE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

a number of ponds have been made, often enclosed separately for the different kinds of ducks. In addition, following the theory



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IN THE DUCK GROUND.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

about sixty acres in extent, has been wired in to protect the birds from foxes. Through the field a stream runs, and on this

always maintained by those who have studied the relation of decoys to the number of wildfowl in a neighbourhood, the owner of Netherby has constructed a duck decoy close to one of the woods on the outskirts of the moss. It was noticed that in Norfolk, even in the inland parts of the county, ducks were enormously more plentiful before the decoys were destroyed, which gave them shelter and quiet, and on which they were only killed by silent and invisible means, than they were later. Near Thetford, where the very large decoy of Wretham, the property of Mr. S. Morris, and the decoy of Diddington, and the new one on Lord Walsingham's estate are still in being, the number of ducks is astonishing as compared with those seen in other parts of the county where there are plenty of lakes and pools but no decoys. That by Solway Moss is the most recently constructed in England. It is laid out on the plan recommended by Sir R. Payne Gallwey in the "Book of Decoys" (page 55). The large fifty-acre field enclosed for breeding ground for the various ducks kept in captivity is, of course, open to any other bird visitor



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WILD DUCK'S NEST IN THE RUSHES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

as well. It is admirable nesting ground. The rushes are so thick that they are burnt in small patches, in order that the nests may be more easily discovered. It should be remembered also that this is on an estate of more than 20,000 acres, heavily planted with wood, and divided by the Esk, a salmon river.

BREEDING TEAL.

There are several good reasons why special attention has been directed at Netherby to discover how far teal can be increased, either by artificial rearing or by indirect assistance. They are among the most "sporting" of the surface-feeding ducks. They are also excellent for the table, and they lay a considerable number of eggs, sometimes as many as a dozen, and commonly from eight to ten. This compares very favourably with the six eggs laid by the pintail in captivity. Among the favourable points found out was the fact that, though so very small, the little teal were not difficult to rear artificially when once hatched, though they are very difficult to rear with a hen. For other ducks, such as pintail and wigeon, half-bred "silky" fowls are used, but not for teal. The food given to them when quite young is the same as that supplied to the young wigeon and

young pintail. The keeper says that the best food for young ducks, such as pintail, wigeon, and teal, is chopped egg, put in a small saucer, or tin, with water added to it. The egg, both yolk and white, is placed in the saucer, and as soon as this is put before the coop the water is poured over it. Some duck meal is then added to this, with a little boiled rice. The whole should be given in a liquid state until a few days have elapsed. Then

some can be sprinkled upon the ground in a drier condition. When they take to picking this up readily all food can be sprinkled on the ground, while the water only is given in the pans, the best shape being small flat tins. It is a good plan to put a very young call duck, or a young mallard duckling, with each coop, to teach the others to feed, as the start is always the difficulty. The hours of feeding are: The

first feed at 7 a.m., and four feeds later at intervals of three hours for the first fortnight, when the number is reduced.

It has been noted that a hen is not a good foster-mother for young teal. Neither is a tame teal duck, for the following reason. The first instinct of the teal is to hide, and to teach its young ones to hide. In the reawakening of natural instinct caused by the possession of a family the mother teal vanishes



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FIFTY WIGEON, FREE, ON THIS POOL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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A PINTAIL AND TWO GADWALLS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

at once, when it ought to bring its young ones out to be fed, into the rushes and sedge of the pool, and all the young ones follow it. This difficulty was met by giving teals' eggs to the small variety of the mallard known as the "call duck," to sit on and rear. These call ducks were very successful in hatching out the teals' eggs and in bringing up the families, which they taught to be as tame as they were. It was soon evident that if teal were encouraged and kept quiet round a central home, they will nest in the immediate vicinity of the pond and remain there throughout the season. At the same time, they need more cover, and like to be better hidden than wild ducks. It is not likely, for instance, that any number of teal would remain in a wood almost without water, like one close to the park at Netherby, where, perhaps, a couple of thousand mallard remain every day, and fly out at flight-time, to return at dawn. Teal must have a sheltered pond, with, if possible, bushes growing round, and also in the water.

The excellent plan of filling up old marl-pits in woods, with water drained in from any ditches or runnels near, in use in the woods of Beaulieu, by which these hollows are converted into teal pits at small expense, has been described in COUNTRY LIFE. But it is proposed to try an experiment at Netherby in providing a new kind of home for teal, and it is believed that they will find a haunt which they are likely to appreciate if they are allowed the use of a kind of decoy much favoured by the Japanese. This Japanese teal decoy is described and figured in the late Rev. H. A. Macpherson's "History of Fowling" (page 262). Mr. Macpherson was the chief historian of the birds of Cumberland, and frequently referred in his books and articles to the great local increase in the duck tribe in the county caused since the influence of the Netherby preserves began to make itself felt. It is interesting to note that his scholarly record and illustrations of the devices used for so many centuries and in so many countries may have a posthumous result in still further increasing the wildfowl of the county. The Japanese decoy pond is small, and with an island in the middle, to which teal are very partial, as they rest and sleep on it. The pond forms a rather narrow ring, and from it a great number of short, narrow pipes, with banks only 2ft. high, and with a width where they leave the pond of 5ft., are cut, forming a "whorl." Reeds and rushes are allowed to grow up outside the pipes, which are not covered by netting, as in Japan it is the custom to catch the duck as they rise in a long-handled landing-net. Omitting this part of the proceedings, it is pretty obvious that this is just the kind of place to form a centre and home for teal, and it is proposed to make one on the side of Solway Moss. Meantime wild-bred teal have already increased very much. Where formerly perhaps 100, and later 200, could be seen, as many as 600 may be flushed in a flock. It should be added that the teal, at first kept in confinement, only laid gradually and not freely, so they were all set at liberty, which they repaid by remaining to nest round the place.

C. J. CORNISH.

(To be continued.)

IN THE GARDEN.

IN THE TIME OF ROSES—PRUNING CLIMBING ROSES.

IT may appear a strange season to write of pruning, but the rosarian knows better, for at no time of the year is it more necessary to prune climbing Roses than in July, when the flowers have for the most part faded. Climbers should be pruned when the flowering is over. Cut away old and worn-out growths, shoots that point towards the centre of the plant, and leave the strong vigorous stems that will carry flowers next year. It is a sorry time for climbing Roses when the pruning is done in spring, and in the same way as one would deal with the dwarf plants; that is, to cut the whole of the growths hard back. If only climbing varieties were pruned correctly there would be few failures. Writing of this group reminds us of the vast strides that have been made of late years in developing this beautiful race. Dorothy Perkins, the double Rose as fresh and pure as the tender shades of the wild Briar, seems to have stimulated a deep interest in this type, and praiseworthy efforts are being made to increase the varieties. We want climbing Roses that will keep with us until the autumn, and not, as Carmine Pillar and a host of others are prone to do, give forth a blaze of colour, and then nothing but leaves until the winter. The climbing Roses that will flower in profusion for more than a month are few in number. It is needful to watch for the opening of most of them and be content for another twelve months. A very beautiful new variety was shown recently by Messrs. B. R. Cant, The Old Rose Gardens, Colchester. It was named Maharajah, and in colour is reminiscent of Bardu Job; its flowers are very large, deep crimson in colour, sweet, and covering the shoots until not a leaf is seen. It is, unfortunately, a shade that the sun will bleach, but the simple plan to avoid that is to plant it where it is not fully exposed. It is wise to be diligent in searching for insect pests. A caterpillar is particularly troublesome, and the only real remedy is to pinch the leaf wherein it is hiding. There is nothing like hand-picking for caterpillars and frequent syringing for green-fly.

THE HIMALAYAN RHODODENDRONS.

A charming paper was read recently before the Horticultural Club by Sir John Llewelyn, Bart., upon Himalayan Rhododendrons. No race of tree

or shrub, whichever one is pleased to call them, is more beautiful than this, and in the course of his remarks Sir John said, "Much advantage and pleasure are to be obtained by those who will exercise their judgment and utilise their experience, discriminating between the species of Himalayan Rhododendrons which have proved, and are being proved, hardy in this country. I fear it is idle to expect that some of the most glorious species, such as *R. Nuttalli* and *R. Maddenii*, which grow low down in the Himalayan slopes, can be as hardy or stand winters as well as those which flourish right up towards the eternal snows of the mighty mountain ranges of Sikkim, Nepal, and Bhotan, at altitudes of 14,000ft. or 15,000ft. But the word hardy is so comparative a term, so apt to be misunderstood, so liable to be upset under conditions which I was about to call abnormal, but which are only too well known to British horticulturists, that I only use the word with the large reservation that several species are quite hardy enough for the conditions they usually find in my climate and soil in South Wales, and still more so in the extreme south-western corner of England, Cornwall, and in Ireland. My experience is that if the wood is well hardened after the summer's growth, they will stand any amount of winter frost—28deg. below freezing point—and that the greatest risks are incurred by the species whose leaf action is early, and who thus are more liable to be checked by our May frosts. March and April are the blooming period of our most common species, *R. arboreum*, *barbatum*, *Thomsoni*, *ciliatum*, *Campbelliae*, and *campanulatum*, and few seasons pass without some loss of trusses of the bloom; but if leaf action will not commence till the end of May, or early in June, the plant is none the worse, and there is no greater delight to the lover of his favourites than to see the way they come up to the scratch after the knock-down blow in the first round between, say, *R. barbatum* and Jack Frost on 'St. David's Day.' Here is an original note, copied verbatim from a memorandum made eleven years ago: 'Monday, February 27th, 1893. Wet, turning to frost. My trusses of *R. barbatum* spoilt; but eight days later fresh trusses were out in unclouded beauty.'

EARLY FLOWERS AND THE WEATHER.

"Another instance of the way in which the early bloom will contend with bad weather occurred about the same time, when, towards the end of March, my *Thomsoni* trusses were retarded for a fortnight by severe frost. They had already expanded enough to show the deep blood-red colour, but waited quiescent until the thaw came, and then bloomed as though nothing had interfered with them. In various seasons our British spring amuses itself with a display of alternate sun and rain, snow and wind, and I think the kaleidoscopic vagaries of the weather are more marked in the West Country than near London. Seldom, indeed, do we escape mischievous spring (May) frosts, and in different years I have known Oak, Ash, Bracken, and Bramble cut off wholesale, just as the frost chances to find the sap in the plant. We do not hesitate to call these native British trees and plants 'hardy,' but the fact is a fair illustration of my argument, that the word 'hardy' must be a comparative term. Though the climate has much influence in success or non-success, soil also is probably a more important factor in the treatment of the Rhododendron; and though I have no evidence before me to show if the species from the great Himalayan range of mountains, or any of them, and if so which, resent the limestone formation in the same way as Hybrid Ponticum and *catawbiense* are well known to do, yet, so far as I have seen, all Rhododendrons appear to like the same treatment—cool peaty or loamy soil in which the plant can shade its own roots. I have no peat, but loamy earth and leaf-mould, which supply all my plants require."

THE APPLICATION OF INSECTICIDES.

There are many insecticides on the market. Many, if not most of them, are useless; it should always be remembered that one application is seldom sufficient, for, as a rule, the eggs, if there are any, are not killed; so the process should be repeated in the course of five or six days, and care taken that the under sides of the leaves are well wetted when they are infested by red spider, thrips, and other pests that live in that position. Most insecticides are best applied by a spraying machine or a syringe with a spraying nozzle. These are made so that the under sides of the leaves are easily reached, and much less of the insecticide is needed than if an ordinary syringe is used. Soft soap forms one of the ingredients in most of the mixtures. The reason of this is that the soap helps the fluid to adhere to the insects, and it also chokes their breathing spores. (Insects do not breathe through their mouths, but through certain spores which are usually placed on either side of their bodies.) Insecticides should not be used when the sun is shining on the plants or in very bright weather. Apply them in the evening, and wash the plant clean the next morning. Plants with very tender shoots and foliage are more likely to be injured than others, and in their cases the washes should be more diluted.

PLANTING A SHADY BORDER.

In gardens large and small the shady border always presents a difficulty; it is never a success and generally an eyesore. The reason is a want of knowledge of the plants that need shade in which to flower, and there are many of these, some in spring-time, others in summer, and a few in autumn. The background of the border we presume is a fence, usually Ivy-covered. The first thing is to keep the climber under proper control. When left to itself the lower shoots stray to the border, and the Ivy becomes a mat of green shoots thickening with age. All this is detrimental to the plants in the border. Choose, so to say, plants that do not flower—hardy Ferns, the Male, Lady, and other well-known kinds. Make a free planting of Spanish Bluebells (*Scilla campanulata*), in the various colours—blue, red, and white—but perhaps the blue is the most pleasant, and of the common yellow Day Lily. There may be German Irises in variety, colonies of Woodruff towards the front, Solomon's Seal at the back, Primroses, Pansies, perennial Sun-flowers, and unless the border is in dense shade, the perennial Phlox. The blue *Alkanet* (*Anchusa italica*) may well have a corner; it is practically a biennial, at least, that is the experience of the writer, and the flowers are as blue as Gentian; it will fill a little place to itself, and the flowers last several weeks, as they open out in quick succession. A border such as is described is not fancy's dream, but a reality, and was made by the writer of this paragraph last autumn. It is now full of quietly-toned flowers—a little border restful to the eye and interesting for the things it is planted with.



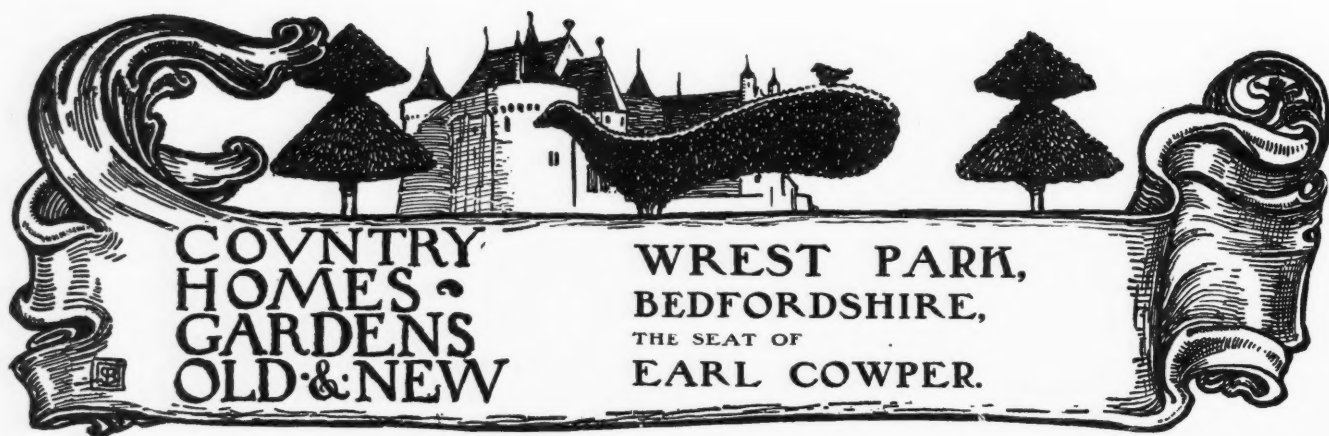
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THE GLEAM.

—Over the valley
In early summer

Floated the gleam.

A. H. Blake.

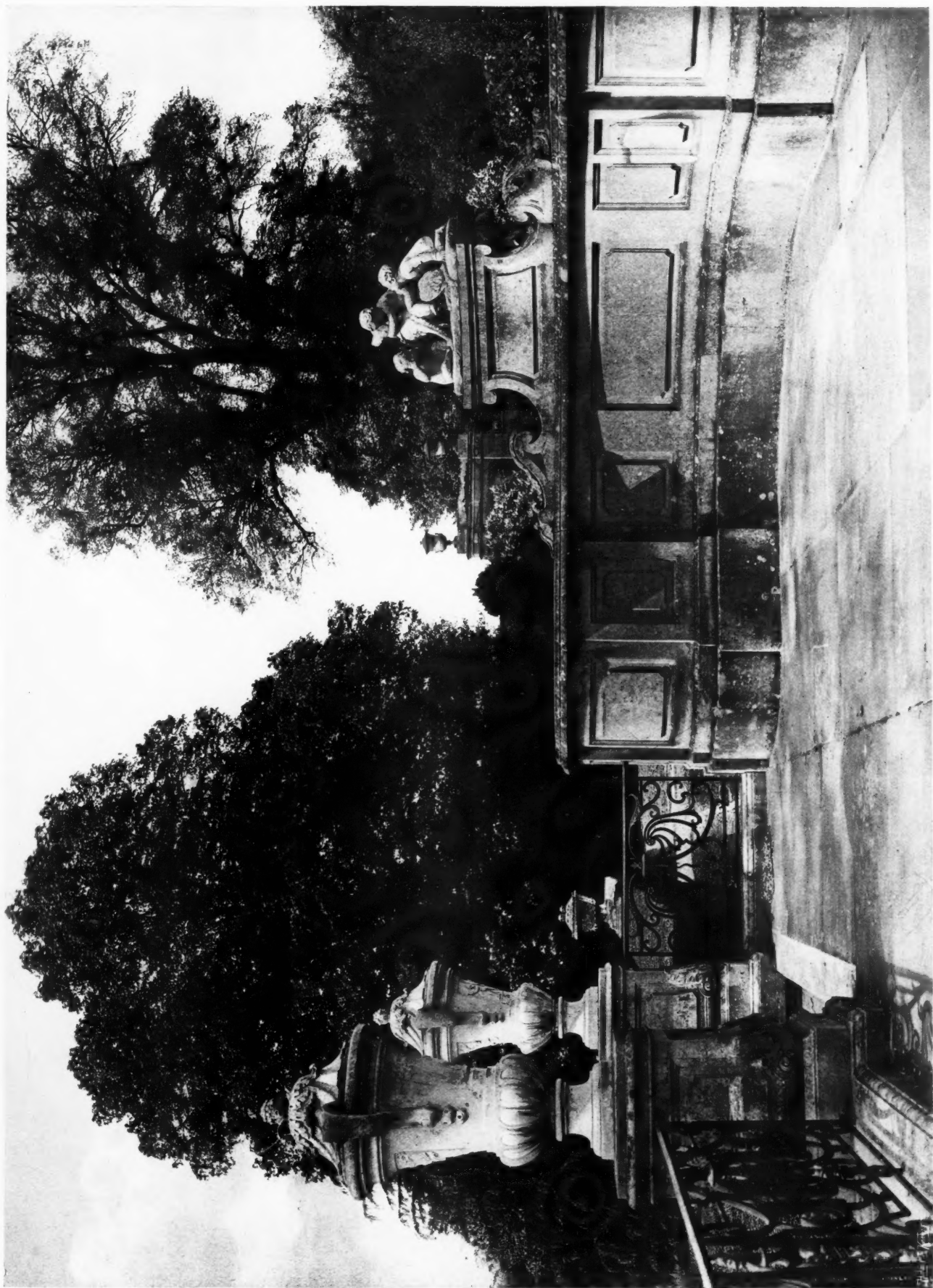


IF it were desired to let a stranger of rather more than average taste learn for himself what the great country houses and their parks and gardens mean to the country districts of England, we should be inclined to think that, as a whole, Wrest Park would teach him rather more than any other. Why, may perhaps be gathered from what follows. But to give the briefest possible reason for the claim, we may say that it is, in a great many ways, representative. Its past story, its present ownership, its associations, its many forms of beauty, of Nature, and of Art, and of both combined, and its place as a social and economic factor in the county of which it is one of the chief beauties, all entitle it to the name. One of the first facts he would learn in connection with its present possession is that its owner, Lord Cowper, is one of the most beloved and universally respected of all the great landlords of England; and he might not think the less of the established social order which obtains in the freest country in the world, when he learnt further that the venerable Earl, a past Viceroy of Ireland and a Knight of the Garter, who maintains Wrest in all its elaborate beauty, is the owner of no less than five other great houses, some of them scarcely less interesting than Wrest. As the Earl makes

Panshanger his principal residence, and is Lord-Lieutenant of the county in which it stands, the time which can be spent in residence at Wrest is necessarily reduced. But the stranger would also have the pleasure of learning how a great English noble recognises the duties which ownership brings with it, in maintaining his demesne at all times ready for occupation, and extending to the dwellers on the estate, and in the neighbourhood, of whatever class, that encouragement which the personal interest of the owner and the example set in care and maintenance bestow.

It has been said of the county of Bedfordshire that while Woburn and The Hoo are, perhaps, the best known, Wrest is far the most beautiful of its country homes. That estimate is undoubtedly correct. Wrest comes as such a surprise to anyone approaching it from any quarter, but especially from the western side, that the effect is rendered more impressive. The adjacent country is of the quiet, featureless kind familiar to all who travel by the last forty miles of the Midland Railway before reaching London. There are few residences other than farm-houses—few woods or streams or even pretty cottages. But on reaching the pretty old village of Silsoe an astonishing change





THE WEST END OF THE SOUTH TERRACE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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THE NEW BRIDGE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE ORANGERY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

of scene takes place. The whole country to the east and north changes to parks, avenues, gardens, and woods, with groves, walks, alleys, yew hedges, pools, canals, statues, monuments, terraces, bridges, and pavilions—the adjuncts of a very stately house. There have been three great houses at Wrest, each on a different site, the present being the third. The trees and waters, statues and walks, avenues and parks (there are two, one for deer and another grazed by cattle), represent many centuries of growth, yet all are in perfection. The area, too, is very great—there are seven miles of walks alone. Yet all this beauty, which



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TO THE KITCHEN GARDEN.

"C.L."

is exactly what the old Greeks meant by a "paradise," is so remote, and this vast area, consecrated solely to the maintenance and setting out of all the beauty that time, art, and Nature can achieve in such an environment, is so apart from the ordinary life of to-day, even in most country districts, that did not the exquisite care of the flowers and their great variety show that the modern art of gardening prevailed, it might all be thought to belong to another century. Nor is the impression lessened when wandering in the endless alleys among the groves that lie behind the magnificent domed pavilion (a perfect example of English Renaissance



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THE EAST END.

"C.L."

sance art) at the end of the long vistas and canal leading from the present house; for there, again and again, we read inscriptions and memorials to the first and last of the Dukes of Kent (of the De Grey family) and to his children and friends, all of whom passed away in the early eighteenth century. The builder of the present house, and creator of the greater part of the garden architecture surrounding the house, was Earl de Grey and Baron Lucas, whose elder daughter, Lady Anne Florence Baroness Lucas, married the sixth Earl Cowper, the father of the present Earl. The De Greys of Wrest have a history as ancient and distinguished as their home is beautiful. Much of the story can be gathered from the silent memorials in Flitton Church

close by, where the monument of the last Earl de Grey may be seen as the last in a long series, the earliest of which is comparatively recent in the annals of this ancient race. Reginald Lord de Grey of Ruthin, who held the office of Lord High Admiral of England, and probably built the nave and tower of Flitton, was, by a court of chivalry held in 1410, adjudged the right to bear the arms of Hastings (which are quartered with his own upon the porch) against Sir Edward Hastings,



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THE SOUTH GARDEN

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THE WEST SIDE OF THE SOUTH GARDEN.

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Knight. He was a direct descendant of Reginald, sometimes called Reginald Grey of Wrest, who was a son of Sir John de Grey who was killed in the battle of Evesham. This Sir John was descended from Anchtel de Grey, who held land in Oxfordshire in 1086. Returning to the Wars of the Roses, we find that Edmund, fourth Baron Grey of Ruthin, was Lord-Treasurer of England in 1463, and was created Earl of Kent by Edward IV. in 1465; but his grandson, Sir Henry Grey of

Wrest, was impoverished, and did not assume his title, which lay dormant till reassumed by his grandson Reginald, who with his two brothers, Henry and Charles, were respectively the fourth, fifth, and sixth Earls of Kent. There is a splendid monument of Earl Henry and his Countess in Flitton Church. Henry, the seventh Earl, son of Charles, married Lady Elizabeth Talbot, co-heiress of Gilbert, Earl of Shrewsbury. It fell to the lot of the tenth Earl to have to take a side in the Civil War. He took that of the Parliament, but retired to Wrest after the execution of the king. His wife, Amabel, "the Good Countess," lived there till her death at the age of 92. She greatly improved the estate and redeemed mortgages during the minority of her only son, Anthony. She erected a fine monument in Flitton Church during her lifetime in memory of her "Dear Lord, Henry, Earl of Kent, to signify her resolution to dye with him to the rest of the world, and to live, after so great a loss, only to God, and to the interest of his noble family. This she made good by her exemplary piety, and regular devotion in her



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THE WEST END CONSERVATORY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

chappell, whereto she obliged all her domesticks every morning and evening to attend her." An inscription added by her grandson says that she "continually added to the profit and ornament of the place," and refers to her "advantageous disposal" of her only son, Anthony, in marriage with Mary, the sole daughter and heiress of Baron Lucas of Shenfield in Essex, the latter being one of the titles of the present owner of the property. It was in the person of this Earl Anthony's son that the grandeur of the De Grey family reached its height, in regard to precedence in the peerage. Henry, the eleventh and last Earl of Kent, was born in 1671, and succeeded his father in the earldom in 1702. He was one of the most trusted of Queen Anne's counsellors, and was created Marquess, and then Duke of Kent, and before her death was most active in aiding to secure the succession of George I. All his eleven children died before him, and towards the end of his life he, by his own petition, was also created Marquess de Grey, with remainder to his eldest daughter, Lady Jemima Campbell. But even so the title lapsed, only to be revived in favour of the Countess de Grey. Her nephew, Thomas Philip, third Lord Grantham, succeeded to the title as the first Earl de Grey and Baron Lucas. It was this Earl who in 1836 built the existing house and all the garden architecture, and created the formal gardens immediately adjoining it; but before doing this he removed entirely the very large mansion of the Duke of Kent and his predecessors, which stood where the great fountain now



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ON THE TERRACE.

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LEADWORK ON A STONE BASE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE EAST SIDE OF THE SOUTH GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

is. It must, however, be remembered that it was the Duke of Kent who made the various canals, laid out the 100 acres of pleasure ground, planted the greater number of the avenues and the ornamental timber, and built the exquisite pavilion and bowling-house. Thus Wrest embraces practically the gardens and grounds of two mansions, the first that of the Duke of Kent, and the second the buildings now standing. A third and older house stood on a hill in what is now the park.

When building his house Earl de Grey also built the walled gardens, intending them to be one of the attractions of his demesne. The walls are of grey brick, to which time has given a very pretty pearly tint, making a pleasing background to the climbing plants which decorate them. The gateways, of very fine design, are of brick and a warm stone. In the small entrance garden, before the head-gardener's house, is a wistaria, of such a size that were the limbs allowed to grow it would probably reach for 100yds. each way. The stem, which is double, is curious. The original plant is not more than 3in. in diameter, while a secondary sucker has developed into a trunk like a small tree. The wistaria festoons the crests of many of the walls. In the fruit garden it is seen to great advantage, while below are trained white deutzias, jessamines, and roses. The exit from the gardens leads to the strangers' gate, which opens from the park into a long grass vista, flanked for 100yds. by the garden wall, almost

for its main adornment on the roses themselves, except that in the centre of the long parallelogram is a group of mermaids supporting a vase, mermaids *denichées* from their old place in a fountain, and forced to sit and contemplate roses instead of water-lilies. Among the new roses just introduced are La France of 1898, Mme. Chatenay, Mme. Cochet, Grüss an Teplitz, and Papa Gontier, the latter all hybrid tea roses. The beds are bordered with violas, among which the Summer Cloud, Holyrood Blue, Countess of Kintore, Pilrig Yellow, and Skylark are the principal.

The *coup d'œil* from the south terrace should be studied in reference not only to the view of the west end of the terrace here shown, but also with reference to the south front of the house, and the general view across the Italian garden down to the long canal and the pavilion. From the house to the latter must be at least a mile; and the pleasure grounds extend nearly half a mile beyond that, through the walks and groves laid out by the Duke of Kent. But far beyond the formal garden, and on either side, out of the direct line of view, are wide lawns, pleasaunces, great trees, walks, orchards, garden-houses, and an orangery, which form part of the general design and "lay-out."

The important part played by statuary in all this will be evident from the photographs here shown. Many of the figures are exceedingly fine, while others are of no great merit; but the



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THE DOG WALK.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

to the foot of which the grass extends. The whole length of the wall is covered with roses and other climbers. The best known of these is a trained Judas tree, which extends over the wall, rising in a fan shape from a mass of stems for a length of 20ft. and a height of 15ft. The rosy flowers and curious bark and leafage have a very fine effect on the opal-coloured wall. Between this fine vista and the house is another enclosure, walled and entered by beautiful gates, known as "my lady's garden." In this the sculpture, which is so freely distributed over the whole of the grounds of Wrest, makes its first appearance, in the form of statues of children, by Bauerscheit, dated 1729. This *motif*, very French in style, reappears in nearly all the gardens and on the terraces, the gay little white marble figures being engaged in every form of frolic. The west end of the house with the terrace forms the east side of this garden, from which, running southward, is the rose garden. A word should be said here as to the "lay-out" of the principal mass of formal gardens. The chief and central one is the Italian garden, which extends for the full width of the house front. This is flanked on either side by a raised turf platform running at right angles to the façade of the house, and on the smooth turf stand in the centre two rows of ancient trees. Parallel with that on the west, and between it and the long vista of the walled gardens, is the rose garden. Very properly it depends

effect is admirable in a stately garden of this kind. The statues emphasise the sense of space. The house is built of a warm-coloured stone, and the window-panes are not painted, but gilded, which gives to the whole a very bright and gay appearance, bowered as it is amongst the deep greenery of a very humid climate, for the great area of trees and grass at Wrest, lying for the most part in a shallow depression amongst low hills, and watered by the canals and pools filled by an everlasting spring, attracts and retains moisture. The result is seen in the wonderful growth of the trees in the lower pleasure grounds. Their age is uncertain, but their size gigantic, and the regularity of their growth a source of constant wonder. The finest ash trees in England are in the park, and there are beeches which shoot up for 40ft. without a branch, as round as flutes, and as thick as the pillars of Baalbec. The "lay-out" of the Italian garden was all designed by Earl de Grey himself. There are ancient men still working in the gardens who remember him pegging out all the designs with pins and tape. The design is a most elegant conventionalisation of themes suggested by the growth of flowers and plants, those near the terrace being suggested by the tulip, and those further off by other floral themes. The whole is elaborately bordered out in box, and the effect is very good. The statuary in this garden numbers among its principal pieces four magnificent groups, more than life size, cast

in lead. The details may be gathered from the photographs here shown, but beyond the fact that they were bought in Holland very little seems to be known of their history. These principal groups have, by a most unfortunate mistake, been covered with paint at some distant date. Apart from the loss of the beautiful tint and tone which lead left to itself in our climate always assumes, it is well known that paint on a statue or representation of any animate thing completely destroys the modelling, as it has done in this case. In many parts of these unique lead figures the paint is already peeling or shrinking off. It might well be removed entirely by the aid of a solvent so tested as not to injure the surface of the lead. Scraping would lead to injury. The subsidiary groups of statues in the garden are valuable mainly from their decorative effect.

The vista of clipped trees leading to the head of the long canal was extended by the present Earl Cowper across the whole space intervening between the formal garden and the head of the canal, thus greatly augmenting the sense of distance. But on either side, extending crossways, are two wide areas of trees, lawns, and garden accessories of great importance. To the right, looking from the house, is the orangery. The illustration describes it better than words. It contains in the winter some of the largest orange trees, if not the largest, in England, which were purchased by Earl de Grey from Louis Philippe. These, in full flower and fruit, are brought into the gardens, and set crosswise to the main vista, in mid-June, remaining in the open till October.

WEST HIGHLAND TERRIERS.

ON a previous occasion we have shown photographs of the famous white terriers belonging to Colonel Malcolm of Poltalloch, but those we reproduce to-day have a peculiar interest of their own, since they show not only the dogs, but the nature of the country they work in. The worst of so many breeds of dogs is that many of them have become useless. Sport has entirely changed in nature during the last generation or so, and extremely few dogs are required in it. The shooter scarcely needs more than a good retriever; the deer-stalker has almost dispensed with the deerhound, it being found by experience that a good collie is just as good for pulling down a wounded stag. Terriers have had their sphere of operations greatly limited. The fox-terrier, it is true, is still essential in a pack of hounds, but all kinds of bull-baiting, badger-baiting, dog-fighting, and rat-killing have been sternly discountenanced by the law, so that the dogs which used to be required for these old-fashioned sports are now reduced to the level of mere show-bench beauties. Exhibition invariably has the effect of producing a finer and less sturdy type of animal. With terriers it has resulted in the development of an animal



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

A FOX CAIRN.

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never meant to go to earth. Some time ago Colonel Malcolm wrote to a contemporary some letters, which explained how he has managed to preserve the sporting qualities of the breed. He showed that the heavy-headed and so-called strong-jawed Aberdeen type of terrier, after the fashionable pattern, were not suited to the purpose of going to earth. The real power to do damage with the teeth, he contended, lies in the muscles which close the jaw, and in the rapidity with which the jaw moves. Therefore, the jaw should be as light as possible, and the muscles as large as possible, which results in a broad head, and the lightest possible nose and jaw. He contrasted cat, otter, and fox, all of which the Poltalloch terriers are in the habit of dealing with, against the heavy heads of champion Scottish terriers. His principles were so far carried out that he refused to show in the Scottish terrier classes. Last year terrier classes were more for West Highland terriers, and the Ladies' Kennel Club had them in their recent exhibition.

At Poltalloch the terrier is kept up to form by the work he has to do. The picturesque West Highland scenery in which Poltalloch stands cannot be hunted like a Lowland shire, and the foxes here, as in other hill uplands of Great Britain, have to be killed somehow. Few dog-owners have so many facilities for keeping up the fighting characteristics of the breed, since war is constantly being waged against the foxes, with occasional



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

DOIDHEACH.

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badger and other fights thrown in. We were describing only the other day how in the unhuntable upland pastures the shepherds assemble with their dogs and guns and massacre foxes on Christmas Day. At Poltalloch, instead of adopting this somewhat unsportsmanlike custom, they kill the fox with terriers, and long have kept this special breed for the purpose. This breed was originally the ordinary Scotch terrier, and it used to be the custom to discard all those that were white, from a supposition that they were weaker than the others, but the boys of the family, with the perversity of their kind, took a fancy to these little white dogs, and kept them on their own account. Far from being soft, these grew into the hardest little dogs imaginable, and about



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.D.

THREE OF THE TEAM.

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be small, active, muscular, the weight not exceeding 18lb., and averaging about 15lb. He should carry himself like a dog of spirit and courage. In colour he should be pure white, with the mouth and nose black; the ears are prick or half-prick. Add to these a good under-coat that will at once protect him from the cold and serve as a defence against the teeth of his adversaries, and an outer coat to keep him warm.

When these dogs were first shown in London one of the judges somewhat contemptuously described them as "baby faces,"

but he little knew what they were capable of. In 1902 they hunted and killed in the home Cairns no fewer than twenty-eight foxes and four otters, and in ten years their total bag amounts to 500 foxes. In order to show what they have to do more by example than precept we give an authentic story of one of their performances. The following is printed from a report sent in to Colonel Malcolm by one of his keepers: "I started off one morning with a team of seven terriers in search of foxes. I drew two Cairns and did not find. When a little further on, one game little ten months old puppy gave tongue, and when I got up he was busy at a



C. Reid.

LANDING THE TERRIERS.

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eighty years ago the custom began of selecting only the pure white puppies for the kennel. It was a legitimate way of starting a new variety of dog, and a very different one from that of crossing and recrossing, which is the origin of many so-called breeds. The formation of the Poltalloch terriers was strictly analogous to the formation of the red-polled cattle in another part of Scotland, that is to say, the breed was kept entirely pure, and the choice made solely for colour. They keep very true now, and seldom throw any but white puppies. The points required in this dog are those necessary for work. As his chief business is to enter "Cairns" and take foxes among the boulders, he must



C. Reid.

THE HOME OF THE FOX.

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THE OTTER'S HOLT.

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vixen fox who was defending her seven cubs. The rest of the team then rushed in to her, and she could not bolt, as the terriers would not allow her to, so there was nothing for it but to fight. They fought her hard for five hours. I then decided to quarry for them. When we managed to reach them we found one little terrier bitch and the fox lying locked jaw to jaw. This little bitch only weighs 10lb. She had her side almost torn to pieces, until you could see her ribs, and her head and nose very badly cut up. The puppy was cut all over, and was bleeding from a bad wound below the eye, which the fox had sunk her teeth through. Another of the terriers had two of his double teeth and part of the gum hanging out over his lip, which had to be cut away. Another had the lower lip torn away from the gum, and the others had wounds all over their bodies. When we got in to them they did not seem to be tired of the fight, as they were sticking to it like demons. They are all better, and have had many a good fight since then. N.B.—The fox was alive when

we got her, but died in a few minutes; and for the cubs, they were simply mopped up."

The nature of the sport may easily be inferred from what we have said. It usually takes place in spring, as at other times the foxes spend a great deal of their time away from home, and as frequently lie out of their earths as in them. But in May, when the vixen has her cubs, her habit is to take possession of a cairn and to remain there until, failing any other disturbance, she is driven for sanitary reasons to make a change of residence. Often the dogs find her and her cubs as we have described, and by waiting till the early morning the dog fox may be brought to terms also. During the night he goes out hunting for water-fowl and other prey, and at dawn steals home with his night's catch to feed his dame and their offspring, who, by a patient observer, may often be seen waiting for him at the mouth of a cairn, the vixen resting quietly, but the cubs as playful and as lively as kittens. It requires a good

dog to tackle a fox under any circumstances, but to fight him in these rocky caverns the dog has to be as nimble as the fox himself, squeezing through narrow openings and holding his own in places where the two animals have scarcely room to move. It is a question which animal is the most difficult to tackle, a fox, a badger, or an otter. It is said that the badgers have become extinct round Pottaloch, the last badger having fallen to the leader of the pack, now dead. He enjoyed a solitary fight, not allowing any other dog of the pack to help him till he had reduced the brock to a condition so helpless that it was thought he had killed him. Practically he had done so, as the badger was found next day dead at the foot of his cairn, and it is scarcely necessary to repeat here that a badger is an animal which requires a great deal of killing. Our own experience of him is that after being considered gone, over and over again he will wake up apparently as vigorous and lively as ever.

WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

THE MONTH OF INSECT PESTS.

JULY, especially when June has been comparatively free from those deluges which have been its chief characteristic in recent years, is the month of insect pests. Shady woodland haunts, which were so delicious in May, are now infested with a plague of flies that make each glade a path of purgatory. Even if you are lucky enough to have the protection of tobacco, a host of flies notice the instant your pipe goes out, and swarm up in crowds to march about your features until it is lighted and in full blast again. One ceases to wonder why the deer that haunt the forest glades have ears that are never still, for certainly any mechanical adjustment that would automatically continue to flap one's face on either side, as their ears do, would make welcome headgear in a woodland ramble in July.

FLIES IN THE WOODS.

Yet we have cause, no doubt, to be grateful for the presence of those flies. Their abundance in such multitudes wherever the earth is shaded by forest tells us that there the maggots from which they have sprung must have found abundant provender; and when one considers the substances upon which those maggots feed, it might be regarded as a special dispensation of Providence that so large a host of scavengers should always be available. Out in the open the rain and the wind and the sun, with many minor agencies, are always at work purifying the surface of the ground; but it is in the shaded woodland that wild life throngs, and where by consequence the sheltered ground would become terribly insanitary as time went on but for the presence of army corps of flies.

THE BITING FLY.

Worse than these common flies, which only aggressively tickle, are the biting flies—distinguished as such by the protruding beak which is their weapon of offence, but otherwise looking merely like robust specimens of the common fly. There is no delicacy or dilettanti trifling, such as the mosquito uses, in their assaults. For some fortunate reason, they seem to have no liking for the human face or neck; but, wherever else they find an inch of skin exposed or the clothing thin enough to be penetrated by their beaks, they promptly alight to drill a hole into you. The pain, like a pin-prick, makes you start, and your natural instinct is to strike at once on the wounded

part. This is entirely ineffective. A creature has not survived the struggle for existence through untold ages by sticking his beak boldly into bigger creatures and sucking their blood, only to be caught napping now by a clumsy gesture of irritation. The many-faceted eyes of insects record from innumerable angles the changes made in the light by any moving object. Thus the direction of its movement is instantaneously registered, and flight in the opposite direction automatically takes place. It is as though one looked out at the world through a multitude of tiny little windows, so that one could tell by the order in which they were darkened in which direction some huge enemy outside was moving.

MEANT FOR CATTLE, NOT FOR MAN.

But the biting fly is not always on the look-out, and Nature—failing here, as always, to arm wild creatures against human intelligence—has made no provision against the conduct of a victim who pretends that he does not feel the bite, but waits until the beak is up to the hilt and the fly beginning to enjoy itself, and then pats quietly upon the spot. By these tactics and a little practice you may learn to squash your enemies nearly every time, but for peace of mind and body it is better to avoid their special haunts, which are the shady trees in pastures. Here the cattle foregather in the summer, and here the biting fly performs, through its offspring, the same useful function as the common fly in the woodlands; and in the perfect state he is armed by Nature with a weapon suited to the tough hides and dull senses of the cattle.

A BEETLE IN THE EYE.

Similarly, of course, man is only an incidental victim of the mosquitoes and midges that render damp neighbourhoods almost uninhabitable in hot weather. There they have their useful work of sanitation to perform, and, if man comes with his thin skin and rich blood to tempt them from their ordinary fare, it is not their fault. Even more accidental, though excruciatingly painful, is one's frequent *rencontre*, when driving or cycling, with a tiny, elongated beetle which arrives suddenly in one's eye and causes agony which can hardly be expressed in words. Nature obviously never intended that this useful scavenger of country roads, and other places haunted by horses, should attack the human eye, because its own death is almost always the

immediate result. Yet, if assault were the purpose, the vitriolic essence which it exudes could hardly be improved upon.

AN INSECT ACROBAT.

Worse enemies to man are harmless-looking beetles abundant at this season, which never injure him in person, but play the very mischief with his crops through the agency of their grubs. Chief among these is that amusing acrobat, the skipjack or click-beetle, which, when placed upon his back, stiffens himself and then dislocates himself with a jerk, whereby he is flipped up into the air with an audible click. If you hold him by the tail, and let him "click" and jerk in the effort to escape, you realise what disproportionate strength the creature has acquired for this purpose; and although, so far as human beings are concerned, it only tempts children to make a plaything of the beetle, it is a remarkably clever device. Being of necessity long and thin with very short legs for creeping into the interstices of grass roots, where it lays its eggs, the skipjack is a feeble runner, and would fall an easy prey to its natural enemies without some special protective devices. So the first thing that he does when danger threatens is to fall to the ground and lie there on his back with his tiny legs tucked close. Then, if the enemy follows him up, "click" goes the beetle, and flings himself up into the air, disappearing from the surprised pursuer's view. This trick is so entertaining, and he is such a clean-cut and obviously harmless insect in the hand, that one's sympathies are naturally on the side of the click-beetle, until one recollects that, as the parent of the wireworm, he is one of the worst foes of British agriculture. The summer chafer, also abundant after midsummer, is another beetle who—if his buzzing habit of flight did not terrify people into the idea that he can sting, and if his six hooked legs were not liable to become entangled in one's hair or clothing at dusk, when he blunders abroad in crowds—might be regarded as an amusing, though somewhat too common, object of the country. But he, again, is parent of a pestilent, fat grub that devours the roots of plants wholesale.

A FEAST OF CHAFERS.

Although, perhaps foolishly, we abstain from using any kinds of beetles as food, the summer chafers—as well as the cockchafers of May—would

probably make excellent eating. Like the locusts of other lands, the swarming chafers are evidently regarded as a dainty by every wild creature strong enough to prey upon them. In India, the arrival of a locust swarm sets tigers, eagles, kites, jackals, crows, and poultry all agog with pleasurable excitement; and in England, when the chafers swarm, sparrows, rooks, and starlings grow quickly fat, while the kestrel stays up late, and the owl gets up early, in order to have a large share in the feast; and the nightjar is so addicted to the diet that he seems to have acquired a special comb-arrangement on his middle toe for no other purpose than to brush off from his wide bill the clinging hooks of chafers' legs, and thus facilitate their savoury passage down his throat.

EARWIG PLAGUES.

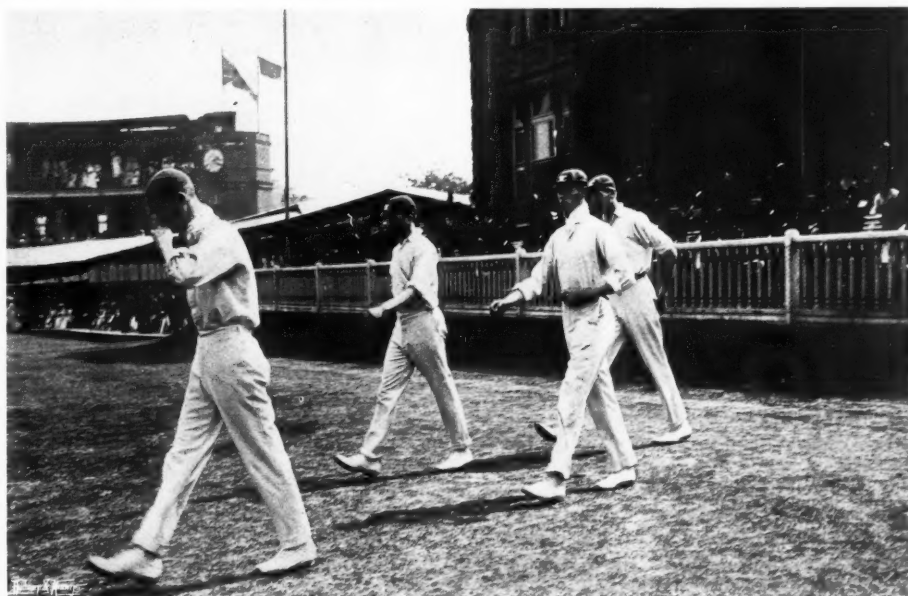
If nightjars were as common as sparrows, plagues of chafers would not periodically occur to trouble agricultural humanity; but, in spite of our advances in science, we are always peculiarly helpless against any insect pest. Thus it is difficult to advise a Cookham reader, who writes: "We are suffering from a plague of earwigs, which infest the creepers and ivy that grow on the walls of this house. Can you tell me a good way to get rid of them?" Earwigs infest creepers for the sake of the dry shelter which the matted twigs and dead leaves and the interstices between the stems and the walls provide. The more you can clear away such shelter the fewer earwigs there will be; and numbers can be caught, of course, by providing special shelters, as traps, for them—such as the inverted flower-pot filled with crumpled paper, often seen near dahlias. But Mrs. Nickleby's eulogium of the country, as a delightful place when the earwigs drop into your tea, must continue to hold good to some extent, so long as we elect to live—as who would not?—in creeper-clad houses. Earwigs enter houses at night chiefly for shelter during wet weather, but also because they are attracted towards light; and as they can fly—having large beautifully-folded wings under their small wing-cases—a lighted room with an open window overnight, near creepers, is sure to have earwigs in it next morning. After all, they do but form one of the little worries incidental to country life, which are far outweighed by its pleasures.

E. K. R.

THE INTER-VARSITY CRICKET MATCH.

SO much has already been said and written of the annual match between the rival Universities that it seems almost superfluous to deal at length with the subject in these columns. And yet there is much to be said with regard to this "battle of the Blues," quite apart from the social side of the question, which to many seems to be the paramount part of the three days' play. No doubt to the many "sisters and cousins and aunts" who patronise the great cricket centre at St. John's Wood during the progress of the match, as well as during the contest between Eton and Harrow, the promenade which takes place whilst the luncheon interval leaves the greensward available is the most essential and important part of the day's play. But I am at one with Mr. C. B. Fry in thinking that the annual contests between the two Universities and the leading public schools have a far greater claim on the consideration of the cricket-loving public for the reasons that the famous Oxonian lays down, viz., that the matches are duels to the death, and that all interest is centred on that particular match, instead of being long drawn out, as is the case with the County Championship. At one period of the game a draw looked almost impossible, but whilst the match saw the eclipse of a record, even that performance pales into insignificance when compared with the dogged determination and sterling performance of the Dark Blue captain, to whom all the credit is due for saving his side from defeat. Of course, many lovers of statistics will go into ecstasies at the fact that another record has "gone by the board," and that the famous "Tip" Foster's score of 171, in 1900, has now to take second place; but it is a moot question whether the policy of allowing Mr. J. F. Marsh to continue his plodding way until such an achievement had been recorded was a wise one, taking into consideration the fact that the match is one essentially to be won or lost. Surely a lover of the game, for the game itself, would feel it a far greater honour to be on the winning side with, say, 120 to his credit, than to exceed someone else's figures, only to see his side effect a draw. It must, of course, be gratifying to Mr. Marsh to have placed to his credit more runs than have ever been scored by an individual in the Inter-Varsity match

since its inauguration in 1827; but, allowing for subsequent events, there was just a possibility that had Mr. Wilson declared earlier than he did, despite the woeful mistakes made in the field, his side might have succeeded in proving the fallacy of prognostication in connection with the summer game, and Cambridge might have brought their record to thirty-four wins as against Oxford's thirty, with half-a-dozen drawn games. These latter figures are to some extent interesting as showing the large percentage of matches played to a finish in comparison with first-class county cricket, where drawn games form a large proportion. But all these "mights" are now beside the question, for the match is over and a draw is the result, all praise to the Oxonians for their plucky uphill fight, and to Mr. Evans in particular, for although Mr. Marsh's record, until it be beaten,



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OXFORD TAKES THE FIELD.

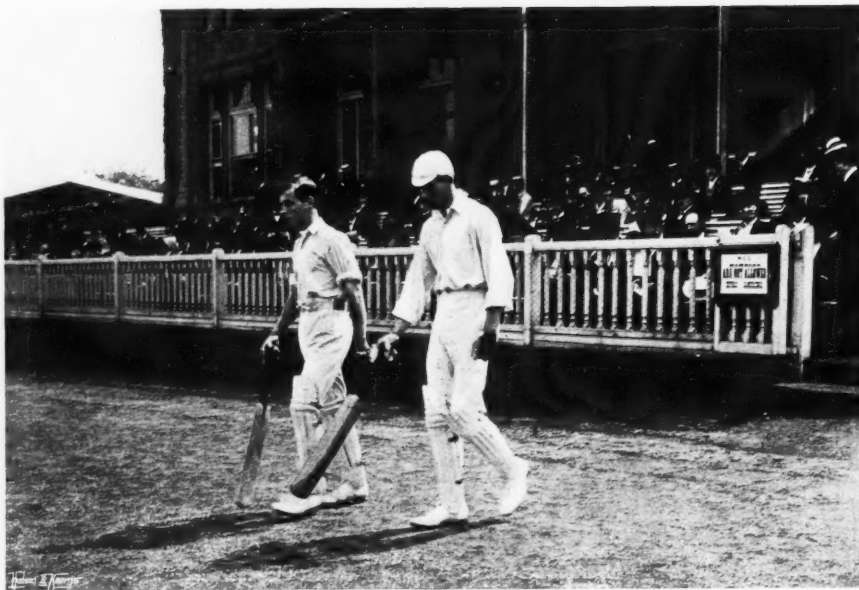
"COUNTRY LIFE."

will rank in cricket history as a record, the performance of the Dark Blue in making 86 not out at a most critical period of the game and so "snatching it out of the fire," to use an old metaphor, will undoubtedly be handed down to posterity as one of the most notable feats in the annals of the contest.

Before dismissing Mr. Marsh and his fine performance in making 172 not out, it may be mentioned that although he has

not previously figured in the Inter-Varsity contest, his experience in the summer pastime is an extensive one, as before going up to Cambridge he had had a good training in county cricket—albeit, second class—and that for the county which contains the University of his erstwhile opponents. As far back as 1898 he figured in the Oxfordshire eleven, when he finished third in the list of batting averages, and the following year he came out on top with an average of 57 per innings, his best score being 200 not out, and Mr. R. O. Schwarz, another Cambridge University man, who is at the present time touring this country with the team of South African cricketers, was second to him. This was the only year that Mr. Marsh figured at the head of affairs, although in 1901 and 1902 he finished a good second.

Perhaps a short *résumé* of the course of events during the three days' play may not be out of place here, although, as I have already stated, so much has been written of the match as to make it common knowledge to almost everyone, and therefore superfluous here. To be as brief as possible, however, the Cambridge captain had the good fortune to win the toss, and, of course, taking first knock, thanks to some fairly good all-round batting, although the scoring was rather tame, the Light Blues compiled 253 in about four and a-half hours. Although this was a very

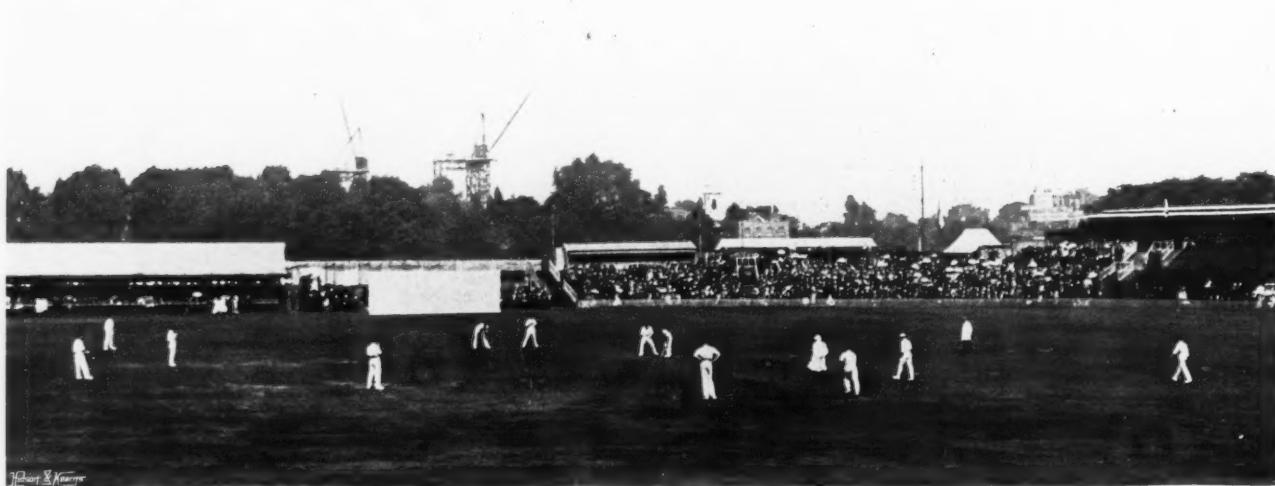


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GOING OUT TO BAT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

little more "wood" could with advantage have been introduced by the batsmen. Against this not too formidable total, Oxford started batting at five o'clock, and did so badly that the



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IN FULL PLAY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

useful total, the time occupied was scarcely commensurate with the score, for the pitch, whilst not quite easy, did not lend the bowlers so much assistance as might have been imagined, and a

first three wickets produced but 46 runs. Messrs. Evans and Branston, however, came to the rescue, and by the time stumps were drawn they had raised the total to 84 without further loss.



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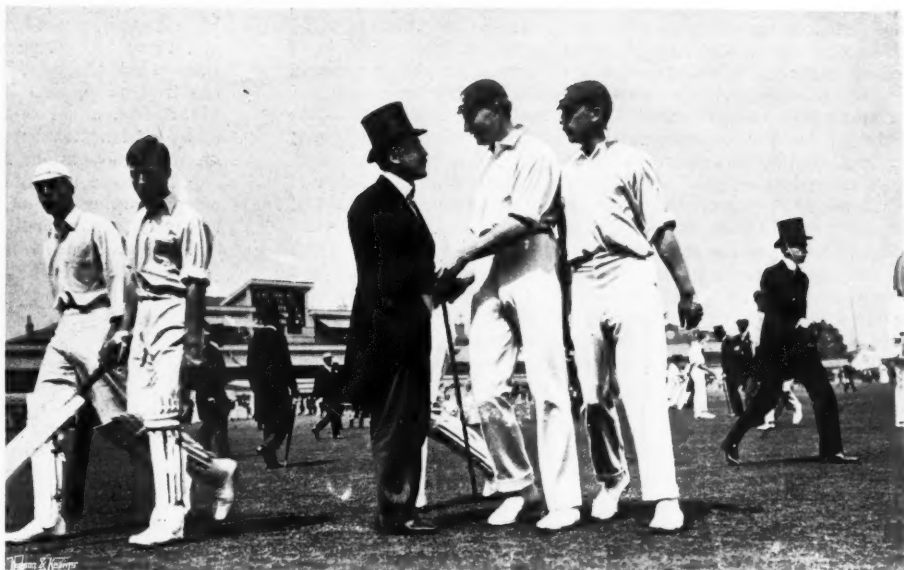
WATCHING THE PLAY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Thus the Dark Blues entered upon the second stage of the game with little the worst of the argument, but on Friday morning they collapsed in unaccountable fashion. Mr. McDonnell proved well-nigh invincible with the ball, and so destructive were his deliveries that in half-a-dozen overs he had taken five wickets, at a cost of only 25 runs. The old Wykehamist, with his apparently easy slow deliveries, seemed to nonplus all his opponents, with the exception of Mr. Evans, who had the mortification of having to stand to his guns and see his *confrères* curl up at what was really simple stuff, which a schoolboy would have laughed at. Mr. McDonnell has a leg break, but it was not this which settled the Oxonians, but the simple-looking ball which, disguised as a leg break, came straight into the wicket before the batsman had made up his mind how to deal with it. Mr. Evans alone made anything of a show, and of the 149 which the venture realised he was responsible for 65.

Thus, with a lead of 104 runs, the Cantabs must have entered on the second half of the match with a large

degree of confidence, but their batting hardly showed it, for it was as cautious, if not as timid, as before. They commenced their second innings just before half-past twelve on Friday, and when the rain came down and put a stop to the play at five minutes to six they had scored 242 for the loss of seven wickets. Mr. Marsh had by this time laid a sound foundation to his record score, as, going in first, he was then not out with 103 to his name, and Cambridge had a lead of 346 with three wickets to go with which to enter on the final day's play. On Saturday Mr. Wilson waited until Mr. Marsh had beaten the record, and then at half-past twelve, with the score 390 for eight wickets, applied the closure, leaving Oxford with the almost impossible task of securing 495 runs to win in—with a probable extension—five hours and twenty-five minutes. There were some interruptions through showers, amounting in all to about fifty minutes. For some time Oxford did none too well, and when, at ten minutes to five, the sixth wicket fell at 128 defeat seemed almost certain. Then, however, Messrs. Evans and Bird came to



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CONGRATULATIONS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

cricket field have pointed out that more matches are won by good fielding than by the most brilliant batting or bowling possible. As a social function the match was eminently satisfactory, the attendance during the three days being estimated at about 22,000.



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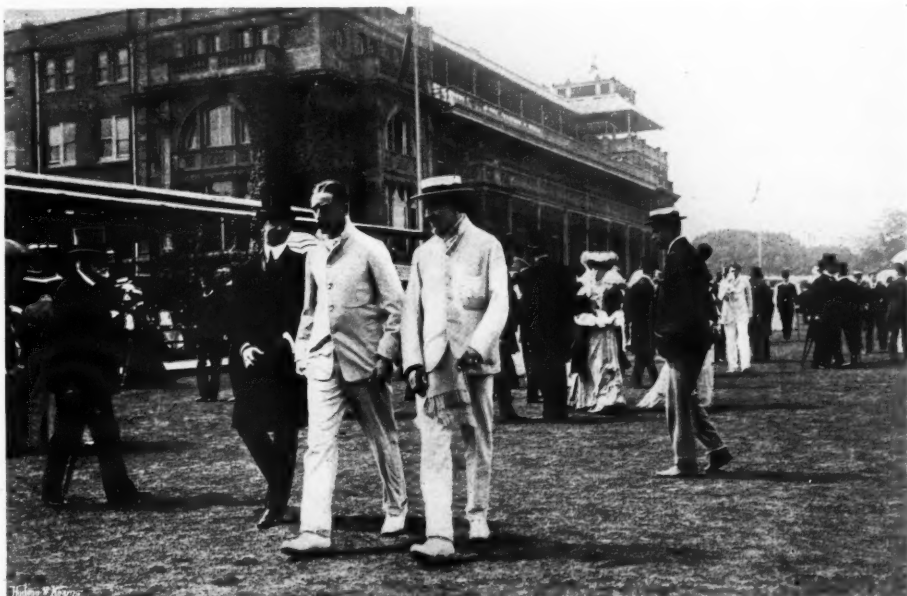
THE PROMENADE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the rescue, and, aided by a series of mistakes in the field, which probably cost Cambridge the game, they remained together until a quarter to seven, when it was decided to pull up the stumps and leave the match drawn. Mr. Evans made 86 not out, and was thus top scorer for his side in both innings, his aggregate for the match being 151 for once out. His driving was very fine, and his stubborn fight undoubtedly went a long way towards saving the game. Taken all round, the match of 1904 can scarcely rank in the same class as many others of its predecessors, although it is hardly right to expect to find Studds, Fosters, Palaires, Steels, or Lytteltons in every 'Varsity team. A word with regard to the fielding. On both sides there was room for complaint in this department, the ground work of the Oxonians being very poor on the first day, whilst the catches dropped by Cambridge on Saturday made all the difference to the result. This goes far to justify the remarks of Lord Hawke, who has been trying for many years to impress upon us the importance of good fielding. Not he alone, but almost all great generals of the

A FISHING SKETCH.

THEY say that to realise that you are enjoying yourself is to spoil the ideal enjoyment, but it is not always so. Get away from office and crowded streets and kneel by me in the long grass by the stream we know of just above Rowden Bridge, in the shade of the big elm tree, in which many an incautious cast has left its fly. Realise the stillness, snuff up the cool, wet smell in the air, and, above all things, watch that patch of weed under the near bank. On this hurrying little water the rise comes on before it is possible to pick out the fly coming down. It is ten o'clock—but what have we to do with time this June day in Dorset? Appetite and failing light will be the only bounds to the fisherman's day.



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THE LUNCHEON INTERVAL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

The cast is straightening out beautifully in the eddy below us, and now the Red Palmer goes on, and still that patch of weed holds one eye intent, though, with the other, note is taken of friend water-rat working his way along among the red stems, and the bob-tailed tiny wood-wren hesitating whether to go near its nest with strangers about. The grass—was there ever couch to beat it? Wet?—perhaps. But when did June dew ever hurt anyone, and, moreover, it breaks our outline to the trout's eye. He's up at last exactly where he was expected, and another at the bend higher up. Now for it: the landing-net is hitched forward ready to the hand, and the first cast brings a yellow gleam, and the rod goes up by instinct, and—*habet!*

We know he's a small one, but fight he will for all that; and he's allowed to, for practice, and when at length he's tenderly handled and put back, the day's enjoyment has, indeed, taken hold of his victor. Still lying low, a crawl brings us into touch with the one below. No response the first time, but the next chance he avails himself of; and now it's no sham battle, but a grim struggle to kill a three-quarter-pound fish in a square yard of water; bushes above and bushes below he fights to get into, and brute force and good gut alone will conquer. Keep the net in the water below and scoop at him on the very first opportunity.

Nearly each pool this day provides fun and something either big or small, but a brace of the biggest is enough for the bag, and there is that perfect time coming soon now—the evening rise—when the mist begins to rise white off the meadows, and the trout plop, plop fearlessly at the largest hatch of the day. Hand, rod, and line by this time work in instinctive harmony, and confidence that nothing is too difficult hardens our hearts to attempt wonders among the bushes and to bring them off.

It's time to stop now, with the moon just rising and the owls swooping low over us. Coolness after burning heat makes the stroll homewards another bit of enjoyment, and such a day, oh! fishermen all, I wish you.

BLUE VINNY.

WROUGHT IRONWORK.

A NOTABLE addition has been made to the well-known architectural and art books published by B. T. Batsford, in "English and Scottish Wrought Ironwork: A Series of Examples of English Ironwork of the Best Periods, with which is included most that now exists in Scotland," by Bailey Scott Murphy, architect. The



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QUIET WATERS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Hang rules! These fish cannot be tired out—there isn't room. Good shot! first time, too, and he lies golden and heavy in the meshes, a perfect Dorset trout hooked bang through the upper lip. That means there will be no coming short to-day at the Red Palmer; mark that, and see if this is not true. Strike or no strike, they mean having it, and will have it.

Down comes the blazing sun on our heads and hands, and the tobacco smoke scarce keeps off the swarming flies; but feet cool pleasantly in the water as we wade across to attack a pool from the far side. No wading to fish—leave that to selfish brutes who ought to be confined to salmon rivers twenty miles across. Don't laugh at this strong language; in this very stream, just one to three yards wide, have I met an individual walking up the middle in waders wet over the knee, who actually expected to be treated as a brother and a fisherman. He caught fish—that I will allow; but no one else in his wake did that day, and his obliviousness to the fact that there could be any objection to such a method was a proof that his education left much to be desired.

volume contains eighty fine plates (size 21½ in. by 14½ in.), sixty-eight of which are reproduced from measured drawings, and seventy-two collotype reproductions of photographs specially taken, with an historical introduction and a descriptive text of all the examples shown. In his preface the author claims to have brought together a larger number of examples of good wrought ironwork than have been presented in any previous book, and shows them to a uniform scale, and that the scale of one inch to the foot adopted has the advantage of showing clearly and intelligibly the various examples, and of allowing a foot-rule to be applied, so that the measurements may be easily read. Besides this feature, which renders the work particularly valuable to architects and students, the photographs, excellently reproduced, show the general effect of the ironwork in relation to its position and surroundings, wherever this was found to be advisable.

The general scope of the work can be inferred from the places chosen for illustration. In England, of course, the difficulty lay in making a selection from the great wealth of

material, and the author has aimed at producing such a representative collection from the best and best-known examples as would set a standard of excellence beyond challenge, for the student of wrought iron, rather than at making the attempt to give anything like a full survey of the whole field. For this purpose he has taken examples from Drayton House, Northamptonshire, Belton House, Lincoln, Oxford, Cambridge, Beverley Minster, Ely Cathedral, York Minster, Bulwick Hall, Northamptonshire, Hampton Court, All Hallows, Barking, and a few examples of sign brackets, grilles, lamp brackets, tomb railings, etc., from various parts of the country.

The allotting of no less than nineteen plates to the illustration of one place, and eight to another, as in the cases of Drayton and Belton, inevitably gives a certain disproportion to the book as a whole, which is, however, justified by the wonderful richness of the work at both those historic houses. At Drayton the greater part of the work dates from about the year 1700, and was erected by the Baroness Mordaunt, who married, firstly, the Duke of Norfolk, and afterwards Sir John Germain; but besides the abundant English work of this period there are some examples of Flemish, notably in the gates at the East Avenue. The most beautiful features of the work are the gates to the South Avenue, the Bowling Green, and the Gravel Court; and some of the rich, but light, and marvellously graceful work that adorns the staircases of the house itself may well be the despair of house-builders of the present day.

The ironwork at Belton, Earl Brownlow's fine park near Grantham, is only a few years later than that at Drayton, the principal gateway having been erected by the then Sir John Brownlow, who was created Viscount Tyrconnel in 1718. The small gate leading from the gardens to the churchyard is of exquisite design and workmanship, and its effect is heightened by the plain massiveness of the stone piers on either side. At Cambridge the most striking examples chosen by Mr. Murphy for illustration are the gates at Trinity, Clare, and St. John's Colleges, which are all as beautiful and varied as they are intricate; and they, like the work previously noticed, all belong to the first half of the eighteenth century, when the art of working in wrought iron seems to have reached its zenith in England.

The work at Oxford is not so great in quantity as at the sister University, but the well-known gates and screens at New College and Trinity will bear comparison with any similar work there, and the two smaller gates into the cloisters at All Souls' College, and in the archway at Clarendon Building, are very fine examples of their kind. As the author justly remarks, it is a pity that the gates at Trinity College have been disfigured by a line of huge spikes stretched roller-wise across the whole width of the top, apparently to resist invasion from without and to prevent "our young barbarians" from climbing out at unlawful hours.

There is a good photograph in plate 52, illustrating the iron grille which formerly protected the shrine of St. Swithun at Winchester, and which is considered to be the oldest work of its kind in England, dating probably from 1093. One of the most picturesque examples in the book is that of the gate at Bulwick Hall, Northamptonshire, supposed to have been erected about 1720, and traditionally ascribed to a blacksmith from the neighbouring village of Deene. Mr. Murphy considers the tradition may very likely be correct, and that the blacksmith knew the work at Drayton and emulated its beauty with no small degree of success.

The rich and heavy ironwork at Hampton Court Palace, executed about 1692 from the designs of the Frenchman, Jean

Tijou, of whom Sir Christopher Wren was the munificent patron, is well presented in plates 58-60, and Mr. Murphy quotes Wren's own estimate for the "iron rayles of good work" to adorn "the great staires," as ordered by William III. in 1699.

A charming picture of a sign bracket at the George and Dragon Inn at Graveley (Hertfordshire) makes us wish that the author had seen his way to include many more of these interesting examples of work in his book. He has given three others only, one from Buntingford, and the others from Gretton (Northamptonshire) and Melksham (Wiltshire). This particular kind of work deserves to be revived, and should have the attention of those concerned especially with inns and hotels. It is not everyone who can afford the erection of elaborate gates and screens, but there is no reason why the owners of even village hostels should not employ the village blacksmith (and help to teach him, if necessary) to fashion a sign bracket such as some of those shown in Mr. Murphy's book, and which from their conspicuous position would do much to add interest and adornment to our country towns.

In plate 64 we have some interesting examples of ironwork in what may be called its smaller applications, one curious use being to form a hat-rail in the church of St. James's, Hith, London. There are also examples of a chandelier rod and wall bracket from South Kensington Museum. Everyone must have noticed how great a field the last few years have opened for ironwork in connection with fittings for electric lights, but for the most part only a poor use has been made of it, and there is plenty of room for artists and smiths to train themselves for this particular work, if they will only study its possibilities and learn what opportunities are ready to hand.

When we cross the Border and come to study the examples of wrought ironwork in Scotland, Mr. Murphy reminds us how much scantier is the supply. He points out that from the end of the seventeenth century there was a marked leaning to the Flemish method, recognisable by its peculiar manner of effecting the junctions between the several parts; and he rightly remarks on the characteristics of vigour and perfectly harmonious relation to the architectural setting. One of the most original and striking examples in the whole book is that of a railing at the side of a gateway at Craigiehall, Midlothian, built by William, third Earl of Annandale, in 1699. There are some very fine tops of the rails in the gateway at Hopetoun House, Linlithgowshire, and a wonderful railing to a staircase in Caroline Park House, Granton, shown in plate 76; but the finest examples of all are from Dombristle House, Fifeshire, the seat of the Earls of Moray. Mr. Murphy tells us that the house has been the scene of no less than three devastating fires, notwithstanding which the ironwork remains in an excellent state of preservation. It is probably of Flemish workmanship, and said to be the gift of William III. to Anne, wife of the sixth Earl of Moray, which would, therefore, make the date of the work the end of the seventeenth century.

In taking leave of this admirable and finely-executed volume, for which all lovers of ironwork will be grateful, it is pertinent to observe that among the subscribers to it are certain leading public libraries, especially in Scotland, and the City of Nottingham Municipal School of Art. We notice the fact in order to suggest that similar institutions would be serving the public well if they would add the work to their books in every place where there are students likely to be interested in ironwork, and to profit from the opportunity of studying the many fine illustrations of it which this book affords. W. H. D.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BIRDS AND MAMMALS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE,"]

SIR,—In regard to a note that appeared in your issue of July 2nd, I am writing to say that the reason why birds live so much longer than mammals is (according to the recent and brilliant researches of Dr. Elie Metchnikoff, the Sous-Directeur of the Pasteur Institute) because they have so much less length of intestine than poor terrestrials. The digestive organs, more complicated in our case, harbour endless microbes, which frequently become virulent, while they could not live in the simpler and shorter organs of the bird. For lack of microbes the raven which feeds on carrion lives a hundred years. Dr. Metchnikoff is now experimenting on the "enterokinase" of ravens with the view to finding a serum which may strengthen the white corpuscles of human beings in their constant struggle against internal infection.—MARY DUCLAUX.

SALMON IN FRESH WATER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE,"]

SIR,—The most excellent critique of the COUNTRY LIFE fishing book which appeared in your issue of June 25th, from the pen of the Hon. A. E.

Gathorne-Hardy, refers at some length to the difference of opinion between myself and Dr. Kingston Barton as to the question of salmon feeding in fresh water. It is a matter of great regret that anglers and scientists cannot at the present time agree on the subject as to whether salmon do feed in fresh water, and I am afraid that the problem presents such great difficulty that it will be almost impossible for either side to be absolutely certain of its verdict. One case that I might mention as a very prominent example of salmon feeding in fresh water occurs to me, which I will relate. In the summer of 1882 I was fishing with a friend on the Figan River, near Stavanger. This little river is very sporting, and the salmon run small, mostly grilse up to 7lb. While fishing this river on occasions when the fly was quite hopeless, we fished with worm, and with great success. In one day my friend and I landed something like fifteen salmon between us, most of which took the worm. In 1889 the same river was fished by my friend and his brother, who, wishing to take some fish home with them, used the worm the day before their departure, and got no less than fifteen grilse. This is only one incident which has come under my notice of salmon feeding in fresh water, but I think it is fairly conclusive. We must bear in mind that the salmon begins its existence in the river, and, as a young fish, is supported by such food as it can pick up, which includes flies in all stages, as well as worms and grubs of a great variety of kinds. It would, indeed, be strange if, with

this early training, on his next return to the place where as a young fish he spent some two years of his life, he should entirely have forgotten and lost all taste for such food as he was nourished upon. What Dr. Barton says about salmon feeding best when resting after the fatigue of ascending from one pool to another is perfectly true. At the same time, all anglers know how very successful they can at times be with the prawn or potted fish in low water. In conclusion, I agree with the writer of the article that it does seem a little hard to sportsmen to be called unbelievers; but when evidence such as I have given is repeated to anglers over and over again, it is manifestly impossible for them to accept the dictum that salmon do not feed in fresh water.—J. J. HARDY.

A REMARKABLE SHRINE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—These pictures are taken from photographs of the Clogan Oir, or Golden Bell, of St. Senan, a remarkable shrine, one of those mentioned generally in your issue of June 25th. Archaeologists say that it must date from about the tenth century. In the old lives of St. Senan (edited about the thirteenth century) it is spoken of as having been received from heaven by St. Senan, and to have descended, singing loudly, on a hill near the Island of Scatterry, in the County Clare. St. Senan, who was founder of the monastery on that island, received it, and it was reverentially preserved there until the dissolution of the monasteries. It then came into the possession of the Keane family. The shrine is about 5in. high, the inner case of bronze,



A HOLY RELIC.

with outer plates of engraved silver, the lines inlaid with gold and other metals. This sacred shrine was held in great veneration, and was credited with miraculous attributes. It was believed that any false oath taken upon it would be avenged, the perjurer being struck with convulsions or death. It was last used in the lifetime of the present owner's grandfather for recovering stolen property, and was held in such great awe that stolen things were often returned immediately on hearing the bell had been sent for.—A. B.

AGRICULTURAL ORGANISATION.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—In your issue of June 25th you comment on the recent meeting held at Bath House under the auspices of the Agricultural Organisation Society. You say: "We should like to know if Lord Onslow really thinks that co-operation might be usefully applied, for instance, to dairy farming, and if so, how? It has often been shown in our columns that the co-operative production of butter and cheese would mean a dead loss to our agriculturists." It gives me pleasure to give you some instances of where co-operation has been "usefully applied" to dairy farming, and, further, the report for 1903 from each of the undertakings I mention states that a profit on the year's trading has been made. (1) The Scalford Dairy, Leicestershire; (2) The Skelldale Co-operative Dairy Society, Yorkshire; (3) The Eastern Counties Dairy Farmers' Co-operative Society, head office, 141, Fenchurch Street, London. All these are genuine co-operative societies. No. 1 is confined entirely to the production of Stilton cheese, and sold last year nearly £2,000 worth. Over 100 delegates from the British Dairy Farmers' Association Conference, held a few weeks ago at Nottingham, paid a visit to this society, and were greatly pleased by all they saw. No. 2 produces butter, cheese, and bottled milk. No. 3 deals principally with the disposal of the members' milk, and last year had a turnover of nearly £20,000 on a capital of only £520. A dividend of 4 per cent. was paid to the subscribers, while an additional $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. was paid to the members on the total value of the sales during the twelve months to the society, and a further $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. was also paid on



A FAMILY OF FERRETS.

the purchases of customers who had contracts with the society. —G. NUGENT HARRIS, Sec. Agricultural Organisation Society, Dacre House, Dacre Street, Westminster, S.W.

THE COLOUR OF BIRDS' EGGS.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—With reference to Mr. Horace Hutchinson's very interesting letter in your issue of June 25th, may I be allowed to quote a case which illustrates at least one side of the theory therein alluded to, namely, the tendency of birds under certain abnormal or unnatural conditions to lay eggs of a lighter colour. I have a rough-legged buzzard brought as a nestling from Russian Finland by my son in 1895. The bird, who has a roomy habitation in the open, passed for six years as a member of the less admirable sex (and even now in the non-nesting season is known from old habit as "He"). Three seasons ago she proved her true sex by laying three eggs—the first, a richly-coloured egg with five brown blotches on a green-blue ground; the second, a similar egg fainter in its colour; the third, a very pale egg with light speckles. No one could have supposed that the first and third were laid by a bird of the same species. In 1903 she produced one richly-coloured egg only (it is my impression that others were laid but were taken). In 1904 we have obtained two, one of them richly coloured, the other almost white. I attributed this change of colouring to the unnatural condition of the ovary in a bird kept in captivity. But in 1903 I obtained in Lapland a clutch of four eggs from a wild bird which showed exactly the same degeneration of colour; and I likewise obtained one solitary example which was practically white. This seems to point to the fact that even without the existence of abnormal conditions the same tendency is found in birds to lay lighter-coloured eggs; but it will also be observed that in this example the gradual lightening of colour consisted in the loss of blue. The theory examined by Mr. Hutchinson seems to me to require that there should afterwards be a recovery leading ultimately to whole blue. The eggs of which I have spoken are now in Charterhouse Museum.—GERALD S. DAVIES.



THE GOLDEN BELL OF ST. SENAN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In your issue of June 25th you have an interesting letter re "Colour of Birds' Eggs." I have noticed that often one meets with one egg in a clutch differently coloured to the others, and have often found that this was the last egg laid, tending to prove that the pigmentary glands were getting less operative. Recently I found an Arctic tern's nest containing one normal and another spotless pale blue egg; but I was considerably surprised to find a black-headed gull's nest with three eggs all of a beautiful hedge-sparrow blue, and all spotless. These eggs proved recently laid, whereas other normal eggs from nests on the same island proved highly incubated.—H. S. G.

A NEST OF YOUNG FERRETS.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—The enclosed photograph represents a nest of young ferrets with the old one carrying one of the youngsters back to the nest in her mouth. There were eight in this litter, and the old one is one of the quietest possible to handle. Round the nest, made of straw, etc., will be noticed part of a rabbit, bits of fur from the same, and the wing of a hen pheasant, which had come to an untimely end, and been utilised as ferret meat. The young ones are pretty, but very helpless little things, it often being quite six weeks before their eyes are fully open. If one of them strays away from the nest it is at once brought back by the old one, carefully carried in the mouth, as here depicted.—OXLEY GRABHAM.